PD READS FOR FEBRUARY 2016

Short Stories, Poetry, Non-Fiction, and A Play
Compiled by PDGazette2

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TWO LITTLE CHINESE SISTERS

One day during the Chinese New Year, when the sea breezes blew softly through the narrow, blossom-lined streets of Chinatown, and swayed the great red dragon lanterns to and fro, Poon Chew and her little sister, Poon Yet, decided that they would take a walk through the streets, and have a look at all the beautiful things displayed in the windows. Their _mo chun_ had dressed them up in their very best silken robes,--robes she had made for this very week,--and they made a pretty picture as they started out under their gay umbrella. Their blouses were of pink silk, and their trousers of pale lavender. They wore gay head-dresses, and were indeed beautiful to look upon. They would never have started out alone if the little _mo chun_ had not been so busy making the great New Year cake, which was to be served with tea to her guests of the New Year.

“Let’s go see Sai Gee,” said Poon Chew.

“All light,” replied the little sister.

Sai Gee, a little-footed playmate of theirs, lived just a few doors from them, and they had no difficulty in finding her home. Sai Gee was also dressed up in her gayest attire, but her feet were too small to find much enjoyment in running around with the children whose feet were of the ordinary size. But she could

[Illustration: _She brought forth from the flute the most wonderful sounds_]

entertain them, anyway, for Sai Gee could play the flute.

It was really wonderful. She sat upon a stool, over which an embroidered robe had been thrown, and played to them. Her hair was done in a coil back of her right ear, and her little brown face was sweet and wistful as she brought forth from the flute the most wonderful sounds. Sai Gee’s father was very wealthy, and so the little one had everything that money could buy. Poon Chew made up her mind right then that she would ask her father to buy her a flute. Then Sai Gee brought forth some tiny cakes, made of powdered nuts, and some tea, and preserved watermelon; and for each of the little sisters a big slice of New Year’s cake.

“My! but we have good time. I likee make New Yeah call, like _mo chun_--we go now; good-by,” said Poon Chew.

“Let’s look in window,” the big sister said; and of course the little one, having perfect confidence in Poon Chew, gladly followed, the soft

little hand clasped in that of the sister. Oh, the wonderful things they saw! The streets looked like a garden, with the rows of almond blossoms and China lilies, and on every balcony swung in rows the immense dragon lanterns.

They stopped awhile--they thought it only a few minutes--to watch some boys playing a New Year's game, and then passed on by the stores, where the smell of the good things made them very hungry.

"Oh, how nice the loast pohk (roast pork) smell! I velly hungly,--we go home pletty soon," said the older sister.

"Yes, we go home pletty soon," echoed Poon Yet.

The little feet were growing tired, for they had never before been on the streets alone, and they wanted to get all the pleasure they could out of it. How they did wish they had brought some money, as they looked longingly at the great heaps of candied cocoanut and ginger on the street-stands. Their eyes must have said so, for just as they were gazing at the dainties with longing eyes a richly-dressed Chinaman came by, and the first thing they knew he was saying: "You likee candy, _ne jai_?" (little girl).

It startled them at first, but when they looked up and saw what a kind face the man had, they did not feel afraid, but replied: "Yes--we velly hungly--we no bling money; we catch 'em plenty money at home."

The man laughed good-naturedly, and having bought them a large package of candy, started on. After they had eaten some of it they noticed the growing darkness. Could it be possible that night was coming on? They had not thought of that; it had seemed so bright when they started, and it did not seem as if they could have been gone long.

Meanwhile, what of the little brown mother at home?

When she finished her cake she called her children. She had made a little cake just for them, and she wanted them to come and eat it.

"Poon Chew! Poon Yet!" she called; but no sound came back through the silence.

"Little one--_ne jai_, come to _mo chun_!" No reply.

With wildly beating heart she rushed through the tiny rooms and out to the narrow pavement. She hailed a passing policeman, and in faltering Chinese told him that her little ones were lost, described the pretty clothes they wore, and all the while her heart was wrung with a nameless fear. What would life be without the soft little arms about her neck?--the patter of the little sandalled feet?--the sound of the shrill

little voices at play?

This policeman told others, and they were all searching for the two children, who were out making New Year's calls.

And it grew darker. Poon Chew trembled, as she realized that they were lost. She did not know which way to turn. Some men were lighting the big dragon lanterns on the balcony opposite, so it was really night.

"Oh, little sister, we are lost! I forget; I no 'member the way home. What will we do?" she moaned. She had no idea what direction her home was in, and her eyes were filled with tears; but now through the tears she saw some one approaching. It was--oh, joy! the old nurse Suey, leading the richly dressed little Sai Chong, brother of Sai Gee.

She was greatly surprised when she saw the children so far from home,

[Illustration: _It was the old nurse, Suey_]

and they clung to her neck, weeping and laughing by turns. "Take us home--take us home;" they cried. They had walked so far and were so tired that she got a Chinaman who was standing by to take them all home in his wagon. When they arrived, they found the little _mo chun_ in the greatest distress. She was very much astonished as she saw them all tumble out of the covered wagon, and they all cried and laughed, and never did the little mother receive so many kisses; and four little brown arms clasped her neck all at once, and the little sisters were so very sorry to have been so naughty that they said:

"_Mo chun_, beautiful cherry blossom--we neveh, neveh make New Yeah calls again without you."

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The Amateurs

By ALAN COGAN

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The ultimate show demanded the ultimate in showmanship--now if only Mr. Sims could measure up!

To Mr. Sims, it seemed as though they had walked along a hundred corridors, and as he followed Mr. Hoode, he felt as though he were taking the last walk to the gallows or the electric chair. When the director finally led him outside, Mr. Sims realized with a slight twinge of fear that he hadn't really expected to see daylight again.

They were in the rich, rolling parkland at the rear of the palace and walking across the immaculate turf where colored fountains frolicked and shimmered in the sun. Lilting music floated out from a dozen hidden sources. The two men sat down on a seat facing the palace with its towering columns and vast marble steps.

"It's a very nice place," Mr. Sims commented, remembering that he hadn't said a word for at least five minutes.

"I suppose it's all right," Arthur Hoode agreed, his thin nostrils twitching condescendingly. He was a small, sleek man with a habit of emphasizing his words with airy gestures of his slim hands. "That section of the palace is the part I consider most uninteresting. After all, there's nothing but row upon row of stuffy little rooms where people come to die. And they take a long time doing it, too!"

Mr. Sims winced noticeably.

"You'll forgive me if I don't appear overly sanctimonious about death," Mr. Hoode said, smiling. "It's just that the other directors and myself decided we must take a realistic view of the situation. A place like this could become pretty morbid, you know, and there's actually

no reason why a guest's last hours here shouldn't be pleasant and satisfying."

* * * * *

Pleasant and satisfying--the key words when you spoke of Sunnylands Palace, Mr. Sims thought grimly. Everyone used them--when not going there.

The words gave him a hollow, frightened feeling inside, perhaps because they made him remember the first time he had heard them used.

"It's a pleasant place and quite satisfying," Dr. Van Stoke had said. "There's no need to think of it as some kind of torture camp."

"But why should I go there at all?" Mr. Sims had asked. "I don't want to die. I'm only fifty-six and I've got nine more years left."

"Try and understand I'm doing you a good turn," the doctor had said. "You've lived fifty-six _good_ years; in your condition, the last nine won't be so good. You'll have pains, attacks, you won't be able to do anything strenuous. You'll hate to live under those conditions."

"I could always give it a try," Mr. Sims had protested.

Dr. Van Stoke had frowned bleakly over the tops of his glasses. "I know I'm a friend and family doctor," the frown had said, "but I'm also District Referee under the Euthanasian Legislation and you are becoming a burden to society. So don't make my job any more difficult."

He had signed his name at the bottom of the form.

And Mr. Sims had had a hollow, anxious feeling ever since.

"There's one thing I haven't found out yet," he said to Mr. Hoode. "Is it in order for me to ask how and when I can expect to die?"

"Certainly," Mr. Hoode said. "It's the reason I brought you here to talk. You see, anyone sent here under the Legislation is given a completely free choice as to the manner of his departure. Most people, although they realize this, show a distressing lack of imagination when the time comes. They seem unable to think beyond the ordinary methods of taking a pill, or a needle, or a poisoned cocktail."

"I can't say I'd thought about it, either," Mr. Sims admitted.

"We have a service to assist you," said the director. "We of the Sunnylands staff have discovered what you might call a Philosophy of Dying. For instance, if a man lives an active life, there's no reason

why he should be subjected to a sneaking prick of a needle in his sleep just because he reaches the age of sixty-five. We discovered that a few people objected strongly to such methods. There are some people who would prefer to die fighting. We had a couple who chose the firing squad, for instance. Another desired the guillotine and nothing would satisfy him but a ride to his fate in a real tumbril. Because of these--ah--pioneers, our advisory bureau has been set up."

"You mean you obliged them ... with a guillotine and everything?" Mr. Sims asked.

"Certainly, though most choose the sneaking, cowardly way out. As far as I am concerned, they died as they lived--ignominously! It's depressing. We have the best accommodation, food, entertainment, everything the guest requires during his three days here; then they go ahead and die their miserable deaths. Somehow it makes all the luxury seem like pink sugar frosting around a rotten cake. That's why we're always happy to find a guest with the proper spirit." Mr. Hoode said.

* * * * *

Mr. Sims listened in silence to the sales talk, wondering absent-mindedly what the director's personal interest was in other people's death.

"I took the liberty of looking up your record," Mr. Hoode continued. "I picked you out for a personal talk because I see you led an interesting life." He paused in recollection with a theatrically thoughtful finger pressed to his chin, his eyes gazing skyward. "You made a small fortune in oil in Central America before you were twenty. That was followed by more success in hemelium mining in Northern Canada. An excellent Third World War record, too. Founder of Transcontinental Rocket Lines. Co-builder of the Venus rocket. Oh, and a dozen other things. Quite a career!"

Mr. Sims brightened a little. He smiled modestly.

"Too bad you had to come here at fifty-six," Mr. Hoode remarked. "Heaven knows what you might have done with those last nine years. Heart trouble, wasn't it?"

"So I've been told," Mr. Sims said, slipping back into his former glum mood. He still did not believe he was a sick man, but perhaps this was because things had moved too fast and he had not been given enough time to get used to the idea.

"It's a serious cardiac condition," Dr. Van Stoke had told him at the annual examination, "due to an over-active life. I'll have to recommend you for Sunnylands."

And that had been the first mention of the subject.

"But I never had heart trouble in my life!"

"The graphs show the condition clearly. There's nothing anyone can do to remedy it. I'll have to submit your name."

He had protested--threatened--pleaded.

"Overpopulation! Elimination of needless suffering! Burden to society! Duty to humanity!" The cliches had tripped glibly off the doctor's tongue as he signed the form. "Will you please send in a member of the family? I'll give him the final instructions. Save you the trouble of worrying over little details during the final weeks."

Since then, things had moved more swiftly behind the scenes and he had had to do nothing except prepare himself--or adopt a realistic attitude, as Mr. Hoode would have described it. But he had lived too much to allow him to get used to the idea of dying in two short weeks. He hadn't even started to get realistic about it, which was probably why he could sit talking so calmly about death at that moment.

* * * * *

"We could give your life a climax," the director was saying. "A man like you shouldn't just fade away in one of those little cubicles." He waved a hand in the direction of the shaded windows at the rear of the palace. "You should die magnificently!"

"Magnificently?" Mr. Sims repeated. "What did you have in mind?"

"It's what _you_ have in mind that counts. I can offer you a lot of advice, but the final choice is yours. For instance, a large number of men like to die in some sort of combat, with guns or swords, or even with animals. We had one man who fought a tiger. Another fulfilled a life-long ambition to play the role of bullfighter. Perhaps I should explain that the government allows each guest a generous sum of money to pay for his departure. As most people do not use one hundredth of this sum, we have a rather large fund at the disposal of those who want to use it.

"The bullfighter was a good example," he went on. "We had a large ring built for him. He was given horses, uniforms, picadores, and a bull specially imported from Spain. It was a wonderful afternoon." He paused in contemplation of the memory, while Mr. Sims looked on, tactfully refraining from asking the outcome.

"Another time, we had a group of old soldiers who wanted to die in

battle," Mr. Hoode added. "We built them an old-fashioned concrete blockhouse, then gave them authentic uniforms, machine-guns, grenades and rifles, and had one group attacking and the other defending."

"Did they actually volunteer for that?" Mr. Sims asked.

"Of course, and I'll swear they enjoyed every minute of it. Right down to the last man. As a matter of fact, we're planning the same thing on a larger scale with a re-enactment of Custer's Last Stand to be held in 2013. One of the men in Research is working full time on that project. So far, we have a tentative list of 138 names. It'll be held in the park over there." He waved gaily in the direction of the quiet meadow which would one day become another Little Big Horn.

Mr. Sims moved along the seat slightly, as though his companion had started to smell. It was as if, for the first time, he had noticed the glazed, visionary look in Mr. Hoode's eye. The director, he realized, would be capable of re-enacting Hiroshima if given the required number of volunteers.

"I'll have to leave you, I'm afraid," said Mr. Hoode, standing up. "But if you'd like to think the matter over some more, I can offer you a fine selection of books to read about famous deaths, duels, acts of heroism and such throughout history."

"It's an interesting notion," Mr. Sims said. "I'll think about it."

* * * * *

Mr. Sims tried to avoid the director all that day and all the following morning. He tried hard to convince himself that this was because he disliked the other's bloodthirsty tendencies, although he knew the truth was that his choice of departure was a cowardly one. Nevertheless, he argued with himself, it was his choice, his death, and his mind was made up. Besides, he felt lonely and this might be an opportunity to see the family again, even though they probably wouldn't like it.

It was the director who finally located Mr. Sims. "Are you enjoying your stay here?" he asked heartily. Mr. Sims winced as though the cold hand of death itself had slapped him on the back.

"Have you come to any decision yet?"

Mr. Sims nodded. "Yes, I looked at the book last night and decided on Socrates. Just a simple cup of hemlock."

A slight frown shadowed the director's features. Was it contempt, Mr. Sims wondered, or disappointment because he had failed in his attempts

to make poisoning seem a socially inferior way of dying? Nothing glamorous about such a departure, he realized. No disdainful refusal of the blindfold when gazing bravely into the leveled muzzles of the firing squad. No bullfight, armed combat, duel or ferocious carnivores.

The director shrugged. "Well, it's tranquil and dignified, I suppose," he conceded finally. Then the practical streak in his nature came to the forefront and his mind ran quickly over the possibilities. "If I remember correctly, Socrates died in the company of a number of good friends. They discussed philosophy."

"I'll have my family instead. I've no idea what we'll talk about. Their names are on this list."

"It's irregular--"

"Nevertheless, I want them here."

"All right," said Mr. Hoode, disappointed. "I'll send for them today. I'll also see the lab about some hemlock and something authentic to hold it in--an amphora or whatever the Greeks used. By the way, I'm not too well acquainted with Socrates. Are there any unusual details?"

"If there are, forget them," Mr. Sims said. "The family and the hemlock will be sufficient."

Mr. Hoode sniffed peevishly. "As you wish. Be ready tomorrow."

* * * * *

The rough woven garment was a concession to Mr. Hoode, who said it was Grecian, and Mr. Sims wore it to make up for any annoyance he may have caused the director. It was rather itchy and much too warm, he thought, as he waited by the fountain at the far end of the park. The hemlock was in a bronze goblet on the parapet beside him. The family would be here soon. He wondered how they would feel about being dragged way out here.

They arrived a half hour later: Cousin Nat, his two nephews, George and Alec, their wives, and George's five-year-old, Mike. Mr. Hoode was also with them, but he left the party as soon as he had shown them where Mr. Sims was waiting.

The meeting was restrained. Clearly they were not happy about making the trip. There were no smiles of greeting; only young Mike showed any distinct interest. He sat down at Mr. Sims' feet, playing havoc with the lawn with a toy dagger.

"Where's the poison, Grandpa?" he asked eagerly.

Mr. Sims lifted the boy up on to his knee and rumpled his hair playfully in a feeble attempt to ease the tension. The others stood around silently watching. No one made any move to sit down. It was their way of telling him they hoped they wouldn't have to wait too long. Mr. Sims suddenly wished he were in one of the quiet rooms of the palace, alone.

Cousin Nat was the first one to break the awkward silence. "Who in hell was that madman who brought us over here?"

"That's Mr. Hoode, the director," Mr. Sims explained. "He's quite an artist in his way."

"He's insane!" Nat said flatly. "All the way over, he talked about nothing but dying. Told us we could come here and die any way we wanted. If any of us wanted to go out like Early Christians, he would be only too happy to set up an arena for us. He even asked me if I wanted to put my name down for a rehash of Custer's Last Stand for 2013. With real bullets!" He passed his hand nervously through his thinning hair. "For God's sake, he must think I _want_ to get scalped!"

"Didn't Dr. Van Stoke come with you?" Mr. Sims asked. "I wanted him to see the place he sends everyone."

"He went on an ocean cruise," young Mike said.

"Dr. Van Stoke? You mean he left his practice?"

"Yeah," the little boy answered. "Another doctor took his place."

Mr. Sims turned to the others for corroboration. "Is that right? I didn't think Van Stoke was a rich man. He was only around forty."

"He went with the money Uncle Nat gave him," the boy said.

"That'll be enough, Michael," Nat ordered sternly.

* * * * *

Mr. Sims laughed. "You're mistaken, Mike. Uncle Nat wouldn't give the doctor any money. He hasn't even got enough for himself."

"But he quit his job yesterday," said the boy.

Nat's voice cut in sharply. "That's enough from you. You know what they say about little boys."

Mr. Sims looked steadily at Nat as though seeing him for the first

time. His cousin gazed back, half-sullen, half-defiant.

"It certainly didn't take you long to get your hands on the money," Mr. Sims said. "It looks as if I can't die soon enough. But I still don't see where Dr. Van Stoke comes into--"

Then suddenly there was no need to ask. The answer was clear on Nat's tight, sullen face.

Mr. Sims turned to the others for help and froze as identical expressions stared back coldly from each of them, piercing him with their long-hidden envy of his success, their pent-up hatred of their dependence on him.

A choking, frightened sound came from deep in Mr. Sims' throat. "For God's sake! _How much did you pay him to put me away?_"

He jumped quickly off the parapet, knocking the little boy to the ground, and hurled the hemlock into the fountain. He pushed his way past them and started to run. Then the woven garment twisted about his legs. He tried to lift it clear, but his foot caught in the hem and he stumbled.

Nat was the first to move. He picked up the little toy dagger and fell on the struggling man. Without hesitating, he plunged the knife between Mr. Sims' shoulder blades and held it till the older man was still. Then he stabbed again, without malice, without any emotion ... again and again.... The blade made an odd ripping sound each time it pierced the woven robe.

All of them looked away. One of the women leaned over the parapet, sick.

* * * * *

When he was finally done, Nat stood up and cleaned the knife on the grass and then motioned them all back toward the palace.

Mr. Hoode met them as they walked through the foyer. "Ah, Socrates' friends!" he said to Nat, who was dabbing at the front of his coat with a piece of tissue. "Was everything in order?"

"There was a slight change of plan," Nat said. "He decided at the last moment to make it Julius Caesar." He held the knife up in explanation.

"_Julius Caesar!_ But--"

But they were gone, filing out through the front door, the women sobbing in their handkerchiefs. No one looked back.

The door hissed quietly shut. Mr. Hoode started at the sound and then walked slowly into his office, seized by a cold, limp rage. From his window, he could see them going down the driveway.

"Amateurs," he spat after them with deep disgust. "Damned, lousy, unimaginative amateurs!"

End of the Project Gutenberg EBook of The Amateurs, by Alan Cogan

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CHAPTER III

POETRY

Though the poetry of the Ming dynasty shows little falling off, in point of mere volume, there are far fewer great poets to be found than under the famous Houses of T'ang and Sung. The name, however, which stands first in point of chronological sequence, is one which is widely known. HSIEH CHIN (1369-1415) was born when the dynasty was but a year old, and took his final degree before he had passed the age of twenty. His precocity had already gained for him the reputation of being an Inspired Boy, and, later on, the Emperor took such a fancy to him, that while Hsieh Chin was engaged in writing, his Majesty would often deign to hold the ink-slab. He was President of the Commission which produced the huge encyclopædia already described, but he is now chiefly known as the author of what appears to be a didactic poem of about 150 lines, which may be picked up at any bookstall. It is necessary to say "about 150 lines," since no two editions give identically the same number of lines, or even the same text to each line. It is also very doubtful if Hsieh Chin actually wrote such a poem. In many editions, lines are boldly stolen from the early Han poetry and pitchforked in without rhyme or reason, thus making the transitions even more awkward than they otherwise would be. All editors seem to be agreed upon the four opening lines, which state that the Son of Heaven holds heroes in high esteem, that his Majesty urges all to study diligently, and that everything in this world is second-class, with the sole exception of book-learning. It is in fact the old story that

"_Learning is better than house or land;
For when house and land are gone and spent,
Then learning is most excellent._"

Farther on we come to four lines often quoted as enumerating the four greatest happinesses in life, to wit,

"_A gentle rain after long drought,
Meeting an old friend in a foreign clime,
The joys of the wedding-day,
One's name on the list of successful candidates._"

The above lines occur _à propos_ of nothing in particular, and are closely followed in some editions by more precepts on the subject of earnest application. Then after reading that the Classics are the best fields to cultivate, we come upon four lines with a dash of real poetry in them:--

"_Man in his youth-time's rosy glow,
The pink peach flowering in the glade....
Why, yearly, when spring breezes blow,
Does each one flush a deeper shade?_"

More injunctions to burn the midnight oil are again strangely followed by a suggestion that three cups of wine induce serenity of mind, and that if a man is but dead drunk, all his cares disappear, which is only another way of saying that

"_The best of life is but intoxication._"

Altogether, this poem is clearly a patchwork, of which some parts may have come from Hsieh Chin's pen. Here is a short poem of his in defence of official venality, about which there is no doubt:--

"_In vain hands bent on sacrifice
or clasped in prayer we see;
The ways of God are not exactly
what those ways should be.
The swindler and the ruffian
lead pleasant lives enough,
While judgments overtake the good
and many a sharp rebuff.
The swaggering bully stalks along
as blithely as you please,
While those who never miss their prayers
are martyrs to disease.
And if great God Almighty fails
to keep the balance true,
What can we hope that paltry
mortal magistrates will do?_"

The writer came to a tragic end. By supporting the claim of the eldest prince to be named heir apparent, he made a lasting enemy of another son, who succeeded in getting him banished on one charge, and then imprisoned on a further charge. After four years' confinement he was made drunk, probably without much difficulty, and was buried under a heap of snow.

* * * * *

The Emperor who reigned between 1522 and 1566 as the eleventh of his line was not a very estimable personage, especially in the latter years of his life, when he spent vast sums over palaces and temples, and wasted most of his time in seeking after the elixir of life. In 1539 he despatched General Mao to put down a rising in Annam, and gave him an autograph poem as a send-off. The verses are considered spirited

by Chinese critics, and are frequently given in collections, which certainly would not be the case if Imperial authorship was their only claim:--

"_Southward, in all the panoply
of cruel war arrayed,
See, our heroic general points
and waves his glittering blade!
Across the hills and streams
the lizard-drums terrific roll,
While glint of myriad banners
flashes high from pole to pole....
Go, scion of the Unicorn,
and prove thy heavenly birth,
And crush to all eternity
these insects of the earth;
And when thou com'st, a conqueror,
from those wild barbarian lands,
WE will unhitch thy war-cloak
with our own Imperial hands!_"

The courtesans of ancient and mediæval China formed a class which now seems no longer to exist. Like the _hetairæ_ of Greece, they were often highly educated, and exercised considerable influence. Biographies of the most famous of these ladies are in existence, extending back to the seventh century A.D. The following is an extract from that of Hsieh Su-su, who flourished in the fourteenth century, and "with whom but few of the beauties of old could compare":--

"Su-su's beauty was of a most refined style, with a captivating sweetness of voice and grace of movement. She was a skilful artist, sweeping the paper with a few rapid touches, which produced such speaking effects that few, even of the first rank, could hope to excel her work. She was a fine horsewoman, and could shoot from horseback with a cross-bow. She would fire one pellet, and then a second, which would catch up the first and smash it to atoms in mid-air. Or she would throw a pellet on to the ground, and then grasping the cross-bow in her left hand, with her right hand passed behind her back, she would let fly and hit it, not missing once in a hundred times. She was also very particular about her friends, receiving no one unless by his talents he had made some mark in the world."

* * * * *

[The poetical effusions, and even plays, of many of these ladies have been carefully preserved, and are usually published as a supplement to any dynastic collection. Here is a specimen by CHAO TS'AI-CHI (fifteenth century), of whom no biography is extant:--

“_The tide in the river beginning to rise,
Near the sad hour of parting, brings tears to our eyes;
Alas! that these furlongs of willow-strings gay
Cannot hold fast the boat that will soon be away!_”

Another specimen, by a lady named CHAO LI-HUA (sixteenth century), contains an attempt at a pun, which is rather lamely brought out in the translation:--

“_Your notes on paper; rare to see,
Two flying joy-birds bear;[34]
Be like the birds and fly to me,
Not like the paper, rare!_”

These examples sufficiently illustrate this small department of literature, which, if deficient in work of real merit, at any rate contains nothing of an indelicate character.

A wild harum-scarum young man was FANG SHU-SHAO, who, like many other Chinese poets, often took more wine than was good for him. He was famed for his poetry, and also for his calligraphy, specimens of his art being highly prized by collectors. In 1642, we are told, “he was ill with his teeth;” and at length got into his coffin, which all Chinese like to keep handy, and wrote a farewell to the world, resting his paper on the edge of the coffin as he wrote. On completion of the piece he laid himself down and died. Here are the lines:--

“_An eternal home awaits me;
shall I hesitate to go?
Or struggle for a few more hours
of fleeting life below?
A home wherein the clash of arms
I can never hear again!
And shall I strive to linger
in this thorny world of pain?
The breeze will soon blow cool o’er me,
and the bright moon shine o’erhead,
When blended with the gems of earth
I lie in my last bed.
My Pen and ink shall go with me
inside my funeral hearse,
So that if I’ve leisure ‘over there’
I may soothe my soul with verse._”

FOOTNOTE:

[34] Chinese note-paper is ornamented with all kinds of pictures, which sometimes cover the whole sheet.

From: Title: A History of Chinese Literature
Author: Herbert A. Giles
Release Date: September 13, 2013 [EBook #43711]

The Merciful Hand

Written to Miss Alice L. F. Fitzgerald, Edith Cavell memorial nurse,
going to the front.

Your fine white hand is Heaven's gift
To cure the wide world, stricken sore,
Bleeding at the breast and head,
Tearing at its wounds once more.

Your white hand is a prophecy,
A living hope that Christ shall come
And make the nations merciful,
Hating the bayonet and drum.

Each desperate burning brain you soothe,
Or ghastly broken frame you bind,
Brings one day nearer our bright goal,
The love-alliance of mankind.

Wellesley.
February, 1916.

From:Title: Chinese Nightingale
Author: Vachel Lindsay
Posting Date: September 13, 2008 [EBook #592]

THE GIFTS OF THE MOON.

The Moon, who is caprice itself, looked in at the window as you slept in your cradle, and said to herself: "I am well pleased with this child."

And she softly descended her stairway of clouds and passed through the window-pane without noise. She bent over you with the supple tenderness of a mother and laid her colours upon your face. Therefrom your eyes have remained green and your cheeks extraordinarily pale. From contemplation of your visitor your eyes are so strangely wide; and she so tenderly wounded you upon the breast that you have ever kept a certain readiness to tears.

In the amplitude of her joy, the Moon filled all your chamber as with a phosphorescent air, a luminous poison; and all this living radiance thought and said: "You shall be for ever under the influence of my kiss. You shall love all that loves me and that I love: clouds, and silence, and night; the vast green sea; the unformed and multitudinous waters; the place where you are not; the lover you will never know; monstrous flowers, and perfumes that bring madness; cats that stretch themselves swooning upon the piano and lament with the sweet, hoarse voices of women.

"And you shall be loved of my lovers, courted of my courtesans. You shall be the Queen of men with green eyes, whose breasts also I have wounded in my nocturnal caress: men that love the sea, the immense green ungovernable sea; the unformed and multitudinous waters; the place where they are not; the woman they will never know; sinister flowers that seem to bear the incense of some unknown religion; perfumes that trouble the will; and all savage and voluptuous animals, images of their own folly."

And that is why I am couched at your feet, O spoiled child, beloved and accursed, seeking in all your being the reflection of that august divinity, that prophetic godmother, that poisonous nurse of all _lunatics_.

From: Title: The Poems and Prose Poems of Charles Baudelaire
with an Introductory Preface by James Huneker
Author: Charles Baudelaire
Editor: James Huneker
Release Date: May 31, 2011 [EBook #36287]

The Soldier Man

by Mary E. Wilkins Freeman

From Edgewater People (Harper and Brothers; New York: 1918)

Two men sat at the study windows of the one large, pretentious house on the main street. One was Lawyer Jennings; the other, Dr. Wayne. They had been talking; now they sat gazing out of the windows at Henry Ludd. A little farther up the street was a small house painted green; at the right were rows of hothouses glistening in the sun with great patches of blinding light. In and out of the hothouses dashed Henry Ludd. He carried flower-pots and garden utensils, moving always with such intensity of velocity that it was fairly startling.

“That man is a psychological problem,” said Wayne. “Theoretically he is not strong enough to do a day's work at the rate he is working now, but he does the work of ten men. He lacks physical strength, but he never gives in. No wonder they call him the Soldier Man. Sometimes it seems to me as if he were wound up to go a certain length of time like a mechanical toy soldier and nothing on earth can stop him. He can't even stop himself.”

“He does go like a soldier,” Jennings returned. “He holds himself like one, walks as if he were drilling, and runs on the double-quick. They tell me he has had a hard life.”

Jennings had lived in the village only a few years. Wayne and Henry Ludd had lived there all their lives.

“He has had nothing but a hard life from the time he drew his first breath,” said Wayne. “He inclines one to believe in births under adverse stars. No use going over it all. The disasters would sound petty, but they were cataclysms to him. Henry's father came of an overwrought strain — as complex a network of intermarriages as if he had sprung from a royal dynasty. He died under forty, simply not enough strength to live. Henry's mother is of another type. Her race has for generations been possessed of an exceptional vitality of body and an abnormal vitality of mind, which has, in individual cases, amounted to menace. Sophia Ludd was a Jennings, and for two generations the Jenningses have been terrors. Sophia is one of the queerest of them. She seems to be a good woman, one that completely outdoes the wicked women in pure cussedness. She has kept all the Commandments to do them all the days of her life and tempted most people who have come within a stone's-throw of her to break them. Henry adores her. There he goes now, in to dinner. I don't believe he will eat enough to keep him alive. He gets thinner and thinner, but he must have a strong strain in him. He keeps on his little war-path.”

“He is coming out again and going to the hothouse,” said Jennings.

“He must have forgotten the flower for his mother. The poor devil is cursed with sentimentality with all the rest; always a fresh flower beside his mother's plate every meal. My housekeeper had it from Mrs. Jordan — the cousin who lives there.”

“Yes, there he comes with a daffodil,” said Jennings.

The men watched Henry dash into the house, bearing the long-stemmed golden flower.

Henry stopped in the kitchen to wash his hands and face at the sink. Lizzie Jordan, his father's second cousin, who lived with the Ludds, was taking some steaming vegetables from the stove. She cast a glance at the flower which Henry had laid carefully on the table while he was washing. She was an elderly woman, with a long, pale face which took on an expression of extreme scorn and impatience. She sniffed delicately with thin nostrils.

When Henry turned, after wiping his dripping face on the roller-towel, she spoke pleasantly enough. “Feel any more appetite this noon?” she asked.

“I guess so, Lizzie. I eat enough, anyway.”

“You don't eat enough to keep a cat alive, and you know it, Henry Ludd!”

Henry laughed. His weary face was extremely sweet when he laughed. Lizzie felt a throb of affection for him. “It is the cat's own fault, when the cooking is as good as yours, Lizzie,” he said.

“More than cookin's needed sometimes.”

“Now, Lizzie!”

“You work too hard.”

“Nonsense!”

“And it ain't altogether the work. Every laborer is worthy of his hire. You don't get your hire, Henry Ludd.”

“Nonsense, Lizzie!”

“You have never had your hire,” repeated the woman, firmly. “This is some of your own new asparagus, and I do hope you relish that.”

Henry looked disturbed. “You know how many bunches I have promised to sell,” he said. “Of course I want Mother to have some, but —”

“I counted the stalks,” replied Lizzie. “That's all right.” She was arranging the asparagus on toast. She held her face, which wore a queer expression, averted from Henry.

When Lizzie summoned the others to dinner, there was a tall vase of flowers directly in front of Sophia Ludd's plate, concealing it from her son. Henry had eaten his asparagus, which had tempted his poor appetite before he noticed something; his mother had pushed her plate aside and was gazing at it with a scornful, catlike majesty.

“Why, what is the matter, Mother?” asked Henry, anxiously.

“Nothing,” replied Sophia Ludd, in a thin voice of strained sweetness like a bird's. She said “Nothing” as if it were the universe.

Henry peered around the vase of flowers. “Why, Mother!” he exclaimed, in dismay. “You have all the

ends. I must have had the tips myself." He looked reproachfully at Lizzie.

She met his eyes unflinchingly. She lied without a qualm. "My goodness!" said she. "I made a mistake. I mixed up the plates."

"And I have eaten up all the good asparagus," said Henry, mournfully. He eyed his empty plate, then his mother. He whitened a little before her direct, dark gaze. Sophia Ludd had magnificent dark eyes in her old woman's head.

Lizzie took another slice of bread. She always said she did not care for asparagus, until there was so much in the garden that Henry did not care to sell all of it. Lizzie lied a good deal, but had no moral scruples regarding it. She claimed that lies were a necessity if she lived with Sophia.

"I will get some more asparagus, and Lizzie will cook it," declared Henry. He half rose from his chair.

"Set down," said Sophia.

Henry sat down with an air of conciliation and alarm. "I am real sorry, Mother," he said, tenderly.

"Queer how I came to mix the plates," said Lizzie. Her tone was perfect. Nobody in his senses could have suspected a woman with that pale, almost stern, face of cherishing in the depths of her soul a fairly malignant impishness. Even Sophia, keen old woman, suspicious by nature, did not suspect Lizzie Jordan. She was, however, coldly indignant with her. She refused with a glare a proffer of custard pie.

"Poor Mother didn't eat any dinner at all," Henry said to Lizzie afterward when they were alone in the kitchen.

"I set her pie in the pantry," said Lizzie, coolly. "Don't you worry, Henry. I guess your mother will eat it by and by. She 'most always eats a bite between meals."

"I hope she will," Henry said, pitifully.

"She will," said Lizzie.

After Henry had returned to his work, Lizzie laughed to herself over her dishes. "He got that asparagus down, anyhow," said she, quite aloud. She had good nerves. She did not start when Sophia, close at her side, said, "Hey?"

"Hey what?" said Lizzie.

"What did you say?"

"Me say? I didn't say anything. What's the matter, Sophia?"

"You were talkin'."

"Guess you were dreamin'. Who was I talkin' to? There ain't a soul here. Didn't think I was talkin' to the teakettle, did you?"

Sophia looked dazed. She was slightly deaf, and that made her less confident. She shook her head and rustled away. Sophia, old woman, very old woman though she was, had never capitulated to black raiment. She wore a gown of thin wool, bright blue in color, sprinkled with little crimson roses. It was an ancient fabric, but still in fair condition. The nice, white ruche at the throat was fastened by a large hair brooch, set askew. There was always one askew note about Sophia. Her hair had never turned gray. It was auburn and smoothly crimped, and laid over her ears, fastened by a carved comb in the back. Her face was triumphantly beautiful, with a strange stateliness of beauty. Her skin was thick but very clear, and rose-tinged on the cheeks; her eyes were very large, dark, and clear. Her mouth was set in a smile which was unswerving. Sophia had smiled through life. It was a mask-smile, but few realized that. They said Mrs. Ludd always looked so serene and pleasant. The constant smile had produced some hard lines around her mouth, but the firmness of her skin modified them. She was very erect, although she carried herself with a slight stiffness. She seated herself beside a front window and folded her hands in her lap. They were smooth and white and showed no prominent veins. Sophia kept glancing at them. She was proud of her hands, which were not the hands of an old woman. Sophia used no beauty devices to preserve her youth, but she fought age with a steady, forbidding front of mind. Her one concession was in the matter of idleness. She was perfectly aware that physical ravages of years could no longer be held in check should she attempt to perform the tasks of youth or middle-age. She therefore sat quite still during the greater part of her days.

Henry passed the window, rake in hand. He glanced up at his mother, half worshipfully, half anxiously. His mind was still on the asparagus. Sophia understood quite well what the look signified. She looked back at him with her unvarying smile.

Not long afterward she heard Lizzie go out. The kitchen door always banged. She knew she was taking the dinner scraps to feed the chickens. Sophia rose, stole stealthily out to the pantry. She found her custard pie and devoured it greedily. She then washed the plate at the kitchen sink and returned to her station at the window. The woman was in reality a queer character. Beyond an unswerving concern for her own welfare and pride in her own personality, she might hardly be said to exist. She never read; she never used her fingers for light feminine tasks. It seemed doubtful if she even thought, but she commanded from her son adoration, love, and the utmost sacrifice. She must have been aware of that, though it apparently afforded her no satisfaction. Henry, and his father before him, had always stepped and spoken as she wished. She was an unopposed creature, absolute in her petty place. She was primeval in her simplicity of self-interest. Henry years ago had fallen in love with Adela Dyce. Then Sophia had shown the subtlety which usually accompanies intense self-esteem. She had not made the least opposition. She had invited Adela to the house; she had talked about her as a daughter; she had made much of the girl; and Adela a few months later had told Henry flatly that she would never marry him unless he could furnish a separate establishment — that she refused to live with his mother. Poor Henry Ludd had been overcome. When he had asked faintly if his mother had not treated Adela well, the girl had replied, dryly, “Well enough, but I won't live with her.”

The engagement was broken. Henry could not afford the separate establishment and would not in any case have left his mother. Sophia had had her own way. Adela had not married. She was a music-teacher, and flitted about the village with a music-roll, prettily dressed and alert. Henry often met her, and she greeted him, but hurriedly. It was as if Adela feared lest Henry should renew his wooing. Nothing could have been farther from his thoughts. He still loved her, but he had renounced her. When he heard of some other man paying her attention, he felt even a sad delight. He thought it hard that she should not be married and have her own home, but spend her life teaching music to other people's children. Henry had at first suffered at the collapse of his love-dream. Now he suffered no longer.

Adela had become to him as a sweet past day of youth.

He wondered still concerning her attitude toward his mother. He had expressed that wonder to Lizzie Jordan at the time the engagement was broken. “Don't ever speak of it, Lizzie,” he had said, “for it would break poor Mother's heart, but Adela thought she couldn't live with Mother. Mother was as nice and loving to her as could be, too. I don't understand it.”

“Yes, it does seem strange,” assented Lizzie.

When Henry then had gone out, Lizzie, who was a rather young widow, her husband having just died, shook her thin fist at the parlor where Sophia sat. “Live with you and married to your son!” said she. “Lord! I'd as soon marry the old Harry himself and live with his mother!”

As the years went by many people who had blamed Adela Dyce for her attitude toward Sophia and her treatment of Henry gradually took another view. In some way Sophia had been at least partly found out. Lizzie Jordan had perhaps dropped a few hints. People began to say that Adela had shown sense in not marrying Henry and going to live with his mother. She was still pretty and popular. She sang in the church choir. Sunday after Sunday Henry heard Adela's soprano soaring in the lilt of sacred song. He heard it peacefully. Occasionally he glanced at her, seated before them all in her Sunday bravery, and there was peace and courage in his look. It would have torn his heart had Adela looked sad and old and ill-kempt, as if she had ceased to value herself. He was glad that she was prosperous. He had a curious pride in her which his mother never offended.

Sophia seldom spoke of her; when she did, it was with praise and a sympathetic undertone for her son. “She is a real smart girl,” she said one day when she had watched Adela trip past the house in her pretty gray suit, with roses nodding on her hat. “I suppose a lot of girls like her that can earn money do hate to marry and settle down to housework, and they may back out and hurt feelings without realizing what they're doing.”

“Guess you are right, Mother,” said Henry.

When he went out in the kitchen and saw Lizzie over the cook-stove with her face flushed, he tried to feel glad that she was not Adela. He thought how sweet his mother was, how kind and understanding. He returned, with no repining, to his back-breaking labor.

Gradually the epithet “Soldier Man” was fastened upon him. It may have been from his almost painful erectness of carriage, as if he would disavow all the burdens of his life and keep in step with the rank and file of the successful who had lived to see the fulfilment of their hopes of youth; it may have been from his speed of movement, which suggested attack upon labor itself with a stern purpose of conquest; it may have been for some subtler reason in the character of the man which people recognized but could not specify. It is certain that, laboring year in and out without the personal benefit which a man has a right to expect from his toil, he labored like one under marching orders, which were not for him to disregard or question, but to obey with his cheerful might. He charged the fertile ground with seeds. His flowers and vegetables, standing in brave order of life, might have been a host which he commanded, not for self, but for something beyond his humble outlook.

Henry unquestionably derived much pleasure from his brilliant flower-beds and his glass houses steaming with the green breaths of lusty plants, from his vegetable garden which was wonderful and brought him considerable profit, and mostly from the comforts and luxuries which he added every year

to his mother's possessions. He furnished the little parlor anew in a manner which to him savored of magnificence. He bought a talking-machine on the instalment plan, and it gave him intense delight. Although Sophia liked it, the fixed smile on her face did not intensify while the thing sang and made music and talked, but in her watching son's face was a rapture which was almost holy.

The machine was not a very good one. Poor Henry had been cheated. Lizzie Jordan knew, but she lied and praised it as a wonder. Lizzie was not quite old enough to be Henry's mother, but she loved him as if he were her son, carpingly, adoringly. She thought him at once a fool and perfection. Lizzie alone made Henry's home for him, although he did not know it. The complacent old creature in the parlor window filled to his mind all the requirements of home. Sophia was as a lily of the field, made self-conscious of its own importance. She sat in her parlor as in a crystal of regal isolation. There was something stupendous about so much satisfaction and so much pride over so little. Sophia Ludd was as complacent with her life as any woman could be, until the cold winter of the catastrophe. The catastrophe was the burning to the ground of poor Henry Ludd's greenhouses and the destruction of their flowers and ferns and palms. It was the more cruel because it happened just before Easter, and hundreds of stately Easter lilies were sacrificed. Henry saved a few, almost at the risk of his life. He felt as if he were saving children as he carried them into the house. The house was never in danger because the wind was blowing a gale away from it. Sophia stood at a window and watched the fire. On her face was a curious expression — the combination of her unswerving smile and a balked rage of eyes and brows. Sophia did not wish the hothouses to be burned. She could not understand why, since she did not wish it, they should be burned. She was very quiet. Nothing could excite her, at least on the surface. When Henry came bringing in his rescued lilies, she observed, calmly, “Put some water on that fire and put it out.”

“Land sake! 'ain't she got any sense, standin' there and seein' our fire company and the two others they sent for playin' on it and not puttin' it out because they can't?” said Lizzie.

Either Sophia did not hear her or did not choose to admit she did. “Put some water on that fire,” she ordered again.

“Don't you worry, Mother,” said Henry. He stifled a groan as he went out. He carried no insurance, and he faced a great calamity. Still he moved with his usual erectness, and did not for a moment lose his self-control. He saved what he could, and worked to as good purpose as he could with the crash of glass in his ears and the dreadful sight of his cherished nurslings shriveling in white heat. When it was all over and the fire companies had gone, and only a few sympathizing neighbors were left, he maintained his steady bearing.

“It's a shame, Henry,” said one man. Another clapped him on the shoulder and bade him not be discouraged. Henry smiled. Then his face stiffened into a new expression which it wore the rest of his life. His mouth looked like that of a hurt and wondering child; the upper part of his face dominated it with a stern invincibility. The neighbors stared at him as he went into the house. “Pretty hard luck, I call it,” said one. “Henry has worked like a slave all his life and he 'ain't got anything out of it. He built those greenhouses himself, poor feller!” said another.

The door opened, and Lizzie Jordan came with cups and saucers and sugar and milk on a tray. Henry followed, bearing a great tin coffee-pot. Lizzie had made the coffee. It was a cheap brand and boiled — not a delicious beverage, but the neighbors, who had worked hard to save Henry's property, had never drank much better, and they were grateful. Henry, still with that new expression on his face, followed Lizzie about, filling the cups. There were both men and women in the throng. Some of the women wept

as they sipped the coffee. “Poor feller!” they whispered to one another, “thinkin' of givin' us coffee when he's met such a dreadful loss!”

After the people had all gone, Henry watched the glowing bed of coals where his beloved hothouses had stood. He feared lest the wind should change and there be danger for the house. He did not go in until the east was pale with dawn and the wind had gone down. His mother was in her bed in her room off the parlor, and she called him. “Henry Ludd, you come here,” said she.

Henry obeyed. He stood beside the high, white billow of bed and looked down at the beautiful, old, accusing face. Sophia still smiled, but her eyes were like black ice covering terrible depths of self.

“Why didn't you put water on and put that fire out?” said she.

“Don't you worry, Mother. We all did the best we could. There were three fire companies, and they worked hard.”

Sophia snorted. “Better have tried to put that fire out with my teakettle,” said she. “Fire companies! They don't know how to put out fires.”

“Don't you worry, Mother.”

“What you goin' to do now, Henry Ludd?”

“Just the best I can. Don't you worry, Mother.”

“You 'ain't got anything to sell, except them few lilies you brought in. What you goin' to do?”

“Don't you worry, Mother.”

“That ain't answerin' me. What be you goin' to do? You have got outdoors left, and when summer comes you'll have things to sell out of the garden, but you 'ain't got them greenhouses. What be you goin' to do?”

“I am goin' to build some new greenhouses, Mother; have them up in a jiffy. Don't you worry.”

Suddenly Sophia Ludd sat up in bed and stared at him. “Stand in front of me. I want to look at you, Henry Ludd,” she ordered. Henry obeyed. “What have you been doin' to your face, Henry Ludd?”

Henry passed a hand over his face in a bewildered fashion. “Is it black?” he asked.

“No, it ain't black; but you don't look natural. What makes you look that way, Henry Ludd?”

“I guess I don't know what you mean, Mother. Don't you worry. It is going to be all right.”

Sophia sank back on her pillows. “Well, if none of all you men couldn't put water on that fire and put it out before everything burned up, I can't help it,” said she. “I'm goin' to try and get a little sleep. You hadn't ought to have had the fire in the first place. You might have known how it would upset me.”

“I can't think how it started,” Henry said, thoughtfully.

“It don't make much difference now how it started,” said his mother, with asperity. “What made the difference was, it burnt down with a lot of men standin' round and lettin' of it. Shut my door when you go out, Henry Ludd.”

Henry went out, closing the door softly.

Lizzie Jordan was waiting for him. “You come right in and have your nice hot breakfast. I've made some fresh coffee for you,” she said. Henry obeyed with a sort of stern apathy. Lizzie watched his face in a puzzled way as he ate. “Don't you take it to heart too much, Henry,” she said.

“Oh no, I won't take it to heart too much, Lizzie,” replied Henry. “Don't you worry. I am sorry about poor Mother. I had planned to build a bay-window in the parlor for her this spring and have the piazza screened. I can build the greenhouses again. I shall catch up all right. But I am sorry about poor Mother. Somehow she doesn't seem to sense it just right.”

“No, she don't,” agreed Lizzie, dryly.

“She keeps on asking why we didn't put the fire out. Everything was done that could be. Poor Mother doesn't understand.”

“No, I guess she don't. Have you any idea how that fire started, Henry?”

Henry regarded her in a puzzled way. “Why, no, I haven't the slightest idea. I left everything all right. Of course it is nonsense to think they were set on fire.”

Lizzie Jordan looked at Henry Ludd. At times her long, pale face had the expression of a mystic. It had now. “I think your greenhouses were set on fire, Henry,” she said, firmly.

“Lizzie!”

“I think they were set on fire. I think the fire was 'lotted out to you just as other hard things have been. You were born to bad luck, Henry. No use talkin'; you know it. You fight your luck and you're goin' to win out in the end, because you're a born fighter, but you were born to bad luck. It was your bad luck set that fire.”

“Lizzie!”

“It is so. When folks are born to bad luck just such things happen. Your greenhouses were set on fire by your bad luck. They burned up because they were yours, and you were made so you wouldn't own you were beat, but would set to and build 'em up again. Maybe they'll burn again. You will keep on buildin' and fightin' and — you sort of like it.”

Henry regarded her with his strange new expression — that of a fighter of the world, made up of the unquestioning obedience and wonder, before fate, of a child and of the indomitable purpose of a man. “Maybe you're right, Lizzie,” he said. “To tell the truth, I don't feel as discouraged as I should think I would, and I'm going to see about new glass and lumber this morning.”

“Eat a good breakfast,” said Lizzie.

Henry ate heartily, and was off.

It was later than usual when Sophia Ludd rose. She came out in the kitchen, in her nice gray skirt covered with a lace-trimmed white apron, with her blue-flannel dressing-sack. Her hair was carefully arranged, and she smiled as usual, but her face looked hard, almost cruel.

“I'll get your breakfast ready in a minute,” said Lizzie. “Pretty hard lines for poor Henry, ain't it?”

“He had ought to have seen to it that the fire was put out,” said Sophia, firmly. She sat down in the rocking-chair by the south window, and the sunlight illumined her crinkly auburn hair. She gazed out at the lamentable ruins of her son's hothouses. They still smoked, and here and there fire gleamed out in a gust of wind. “After I've had my breakfast,” said Sophia, “I wish you would bring them lilies Henry lugged out of the fire, in here. They are so sweet they are sickish all through the front of the house.”

“All right,” said Lizzie.

“Whose little boy is that comin' in the yard?” asked Sophia.

“Why, that's Sammy Harkins. I guess he's comin' with your paper. I guess he's been down to the post-office and his folks told him to get it, because they thought Henry would be busy this mornin'. Mis' Harkins is real thoughtful.” Lizzie went to the door and returned with a letter.

Sophia reached out for the letter. She scrutinized it carefully, but did not open it. After Lizzie had set her breakfast out on the kitchen table she ate. Then she went into her parlor. Lizzie had moved the lilies, but the room was still sweet with them. Sophia sniffed angrily, still smiling. She sat beside the window, holding the still unopened letter. Neighbors began to come in. They talked about the fire and condoled with her. Many brought offerings of cake and pies and tumblers of jelly. They told her not to worry herself sick about the fire, and Sophia smiled and regarded them with her hard eyes, and observed that the fire ought to have been put out. She seemed not to hear the assurances that everything possible to extinguish it had been done.

She did not open the letter until noon. Lizzie came in and saw that Sophia had opened it. She said nothing. She paused imperceptibly, but the other woman gave no information. Lizzie went out with a little flounce. “Let her keep her letter to herself if she wants to,” she muttered. Sometimes Sophia's deafness was an unworthy source of satisfaction to Lizzie Jordan.

Henry came home at noon. He looked tired but unconquerable. He did not talk much. Sophia said nothing about her letter. She did not tell him until that evening. Lizzie went to evening meeting, and when she returned Sophia had gone to bed, and Henry met her in the kitchen.

“Mother, it seems, had a letter this morning,” he began, abruptly.

Lizzie nodded.

“She has just been telling me about it. Has she told you?”

“No, she hasn't.”

“Well, it seems that Aunt Jane, out in Ohio — Mother's only sister, you know —”

“Yes, I know.”

“Well, her daughter has just married a very rich man and gone to California to live, and Aunt Jane didn't want to give up her own home. She is pretty well fixed, you know.”

“Yes, I know. Jane is the same relation to me that your mother is. I always knew she married a man that made money.”

“Well, it seems that she has a nice place and plenty to run it, and keeps two girls and a man and horse and carriage, and she is sort of lonesome since Cousin Clara got married, and she wants Mother to come on and make her a long visit. Mother seems to want to go.”

Lizzie looked at Henry. “Why, Henry Ludd, you poor man!” she said. She saw Henry's tired, brave eyes shining with tears.

Henry gave his head a quick lift. “Oh, it's all right,” he said, steadily. “I can see how poor Mother feels. She hasn't seen her sister for years, and Aunt Jane lives nicely, and, now I've got to build up again, I can't do as much as I would like to for her. Aunt Jane says she knows a man that's coming on this way on business, and he'll take charge of Mother out there, and Aunt Jane sent a check for expenses.”

“Henry Ludd!”

“What is it, Lizzie?”

“Your mother hasn't been writing Jane that she hasn't had enough done for her!”

“Mother wouldn't dream of such a thing!” said Henry. “Lizzie, I'm ashamed of you.”

Lizzie said nothing.

“I guess Mother'd better go,” said Henry.

“When?”

“Two weeks from to-day, Mother says; the man will stop here on his way and take her along. Mother seems — quite — pleased. She hasn't had much, no change at all for years.”

“Neither have you.”

“I have my work. All poor Mother has had has been to sit there by that window day in and out. It will do her good. First I thought she was too old to take such a trip, but Mother seems a good deal younger than she is, and I guess it will do her good.”

After Henry went out, Lizzie said to herself, “She wrote to Jane just as soon as she heard Clara was married.”

Sophia went. The man from the Ohio village created a furor by motoring out from the city and taking

her and her little trunk in to catch the Western train. Henry went to see his mother off. She looked strange, seated in her section in the sleeping-car, strange and very remote. Poor Henry felt himself beneath his beautiful old mother traveling in state. Sophia smiled as ever when Henry bade her good-by. She showed no regret whatever.

Henry, returning home, called upon all his store of courage. When he walked up from the station, the neighbors, looking out of windows, remarked that they guessed it was a sort of relief to poor Henry to have Sophia go.

Lizzie had a nice supper ready for Henry, but he could not eat much. When Lizzie was washing the dishes she wept a little, softly, out of pity for him.

The next day Henry worked as if for his life. He had been obliged to mortgage his house to obtain money for his new hothouses. When Sophia had been called upon to sign the mortgage she had made no demur, but Henry felt mortally ashamed. Henry did most of the work himself. Then Lizzie Jordan's half-brother Tom came and offered to work for his board. He was a silent, elderly man and a good worker. Henry was glad to have him.

The hothouses were finished and affairs moving much as before the fire when a letter came from Sophia. Jane wished her to remain there as long as she lived if she only would; Sophia realized that she had been a great expense to Henry, and now there was the mortgage and the interest to pay, and she had everything she wanted and was more comfortable than she could be at home, and she knew how much Henry would think of that.

Henry turned ghastly white when he read the letter, but he told the news to Lizzie and her brother Tom without a flinch. “You see, it is pleasanter for poor Mother out there,” he said. “She always wanted a bath-room, and she has one just for herself; and she has a screened piazza to sit on, and she is waited on hand and foot.”

“She was here,” Lizzie could not help interpolating.

“Of course she was, Lizzie, but there is more to do with there. And Mother always liked nice things, poor woman! She writes about the beautiful things she has to eat, and she goes out to ride every pleasant day. I don't blame her for wanting to stay.”

Henry walked just a bit unsteadily as he left the room. “A saint with a pig for a mother if ever there was one!” Lizzie said to Tom. “How in the world Sophia Ludd ever had such a son as Henry!”

Tom grunted. He was a very silent man, but very much attached to his sister and Henry.

It was not long after that when Adela Dyce stopped and spoke to Henry. They were both coming out of the post-office. Adela inquired for his mother, and Henry replied that she was well and enjoying herself.

“Is it true what I hear, that she is going to live out there?” asked Adela. Then she flushed a deep crimson, and Henry saw it, and his schooled heart stirred.

They walked along together, and he told her about his mother. Adela decided that Sophia would most certainly live out there. She glanced up at Henry. Once she had loved him, or thought she had. He was

not a bad figure of man, with his erect carriage and his expression denoting depths of firm character. Although he went rather shabby, his clothes were neat. Adela was growing older and had no suitor. When they parted, she asked Henry to call and see her.

Henry did not go. He scarcely realized that she was serious in her invitation; besides, he did not yet exactly care about going.

Soon they met again at the post-office, and Henry had just read another letter from his mother. The letter sounded fairly snobbish with pride and delight in her mode of life. There was something wistful in the man's attitude as he listened again to the woman he had expected to marry. He went to call on her that evening.

It was not long before everybody knew that Henry and Adela were to be married, after all. Henry told Lizzie. “We want you to stay here just the same,” he said. “You and Tom. Adela doesn't want to give up her music scholars. She says that, after all these years, she has got her hand out of housekeeping, and she feels she had better keep on with the music. I don't quite like to have her, but she seems set on it, somehow.”

“Most women you have anything to do with do seem set,” retorted Lizzie. Her face was flushed and there was anger in her voice. She disliked Adela Dyce.

Henry looked anxiously at her. “You don't mean you won't stay, Lizzie?”

“Oh, I've stood a good deal, and I guess I can stand a little more,” said Lizzie.

When Henry had gone to see Adela that evening she spoke her mind to her brother. “Land! it's bad enough for a man that's a mix betwixt a saint and a soldier of the Lord to have a pig for a mother without having a pig for a wife,” said she.

Tom grunted and looked melancholy.

However, the general feeling in the village was one of kindly congratulation. His friends agreed that they were glad that at last poor Henry Ludd was to have some good luck. Even people who had not entirely liked Adela saw her glorified by Henry's long, faithful love, and approved.

Unexpectedly Henry's business affairs took on a more prosperous aspect. A contract to supply a large city market with vegetables was offered him, and Henry's vegetable garden was more successful than ever that season. He saw his way clear to soon paying the mortgage. He was going to marry Adela in the fall. Insensibly he had ceased to regret his mother's absence. There was apparently no reason why Henry Ludd should not be happy, and yet he did not look as well as he had done. Something seemed missing which had tended to his retention of more than the strength of youth — the fighting strength of the man. He no longer walked soldier-wise. He stooped slightly. He no longer moved as if in a swift charge upon untoward circumstances. People observed with wonder that Henry Ludd did not look as young and well now that he was happy and things were going his way at last.

Then came the letter from Sophia, informing him that she was coming home. She insinuated gently that her sister Jane was not easy to live with, also that she missed her dear son.

The true reason for the return Lizzie Jordan did not doubt. She had told her brother Tom, soon after

Henry's engagement, “You mark my words, Sophia Ludd ain't goin' to stay out West and have Adela Dyce here usin' her things.”

Henry read the letter calmly. He told Lizzie calmly. He showed no disturbance, if he felt any. That evening he told Adela. The two were sitting in Adela's studio, where she had her music classes. “Mother is coming home,” he said, abruptly.

“To stay?” asked Adela. She immediately knew that she was brutal, but the situation was brutal for herself.

“Yes,” replied Henry. When he spoke he knew that his romance was now over for all time. He did not even ask Adela if she would live with his mother. He accepted the fact. “I am sorry, Adela, that it must happen again,” he said, quite simply.

Adela looked at him in a stunned fashion. She was not altogether an unselfish woman; she was not of an affectionate nature, but such love as she had to give she gave Henry. She gave in larger measure than before. The man now represented more than he had done years ago. Henry looked at her white shocked face. Adela was still pretty. The expression in her blue eyes clutched at his heart. “I know it don't seem fair to you — the second time,” he said.

Adela looked about the studio. “Well, we must make the best of it, I suppose,” she said, in a despairing, listless voice.

“Adela.”

“Yes, Henry.”

“I don't see quite why you feel as you do about Mother.”

Adela did not answer.

“She treated you real well, it seemed to me.”

Adela looked at him. She was a shrewd woman. She understood the man's mother. The man loved her, and Sophia was not there. She opened her mouth to speak. Then she closed it. There was something noble about her face. “She was never unkind to me,” she said.

“Then —?”

“It is no use, Henry. I think a great deal of you, but I know it can't be,” said Adela, firmly. She rose and stood before Henry, tall and pale and pretty in her blue dress. She put her hands on the man's shoulders and drew his face down. He kissed her. “There,” said Adela, “we must make the best of the snarl of life we are in. Cutting the snarl would be worse than you know, and trying to unsnarl would only make the cutting inevitable. You will have your mother, and your love for her is the best thing about you. Though I feel as I do, I am not sure that I don't think more of you just because of that. You will have your mother, and I have my work.”

“Music means a great deal to you?” asked Henry, wistfully.

“Yes, a great deal,” said Adela.

He went soon afterward. He did not feel as unhappy as he had expected, not even although he knew that his contract with the city market was at an end. Some man had underbid him. He felt dimly the return of something — of some superlatively good thing which he had missed during his weeks of happiness and success. If he had heretofore walked like a soldier, he now walked like a general at the head of an army which spelled victory.

The next morning when he went out a man said to another, “Henry Ludd looks like himself this morning.”

Lizzie Jordan watched him when he entered the yard at noontime, and said to herself, in her colloquial mutter: “Henry has had bad news about business and he ain't goin' to be married. He looks like himself.” Then she added, thinking of her own personal interest, “Well, I know what I have to put up with livin' with Sophia Ludd, but I was kind of in the dark about Adela Dyce.”

Henry came in and ate his dinner. He told his news calmly. “Well, it seems Adela and I have thought better about getting married,” said he, “and Mother is coming home.”

After dinner Henry attacked his work with his old magnificent energy. Some souls are truly themselves and truly at home only on the battlefields, great or petty, of their lives. Henry was one of them. Steeled to meet disaster, he had a strange weakness, which might in time have tended to deterioration before ease and happiness. He harked eagerly back to the fight, which was, after all, the love of his life.

A LEGEND OF KANSAS.

Night had fallen upon the broad prairie--a moonless night. The chill air vibrated with noise of barbarous laughs and yells. The measured tramp of heavy feet and the Hoo-ah, Hi-yah of excited dancers seemed fiendish. Dark, weird-looking figures might be seen, dimly, by the light of a camp-fire; and in the center of the frenzied throng was a maiden, silent and defiant. Around her feet was piled fuel for the sacrifice, for had not the wise men of the Pawnees, who hold communion with the other world, decreed that she should die by slow torture, to atone for cruelties practiced by her father, a fierce chief of the Kansas Indians? The innocent girl might not hope for pity at the hands of her nation's bitterest foes; but she could show them how fearlessly her father's daughter could face a horrid death; could shame their sons and warriors by a brave, unmoved demeanor; and even now, as a small blaze started up from the outer edge of the pile of sticks and began to creep slowly toward the captive, the clear tones could be heard above the din, chanting her own funeral hymn--the death song of her people.

Once in a while some old, decrepit squaw, with shrill and penetrating voice, would heap fresh taunts upon the victim; and as the fire brightened, upon the dusky faces might be seen the gleam of savage hatred and of satisfied revenge. Wilder grew the howls; and still the mournful tones resounded above the shouts of triumph. The flames closed in around her, and they leaped up higher, toward the cross poles to which she was bound, flashes of light revealed more fully the pale set face of the doomed one. Now, she could feel the hot breath of fire. Where was the Kansas chief? Had he taken refuge in the mountains of the West and left his helpless daughter at the mercy of the enemy? Was all hope lost? No, her quick ear caught the sound of horse's hoofs, muffled by the soft prairie grass. The captors, with senses dulled by liquor, kept up their shrieks of exultation. Though her heart was beating loudly, she dared not cease the song. A moment and a brave young rider, on his father's swiftest steed, dashed in among the dancers, hurled the firebrands from around her and cut the thongs that bound the maiden. A moment more, and they were safe without the startled crowd, flying over the flower-strewn prairie, toward the country of the Kaws. In the words of the great poet:

"Where the Kansas wanders free
By the willowy Siskadee
There their pictured tent is spread,
With the soft fur carpeted;
And that sweet young mother there
Smiling through her lavish hair,
Oft shall sing her hunter's glory,
Oft shall tell his daring story,

Till the listening Kansas maid,
Lying listless in the shade,
Dreams, perchance (for wild or tame
Woman's romance is the same),
Of some hero's circling arm
Shielding her from deadly harm;
And the Indian boy anear,
Leaning on his fishing spear,
Sees that same coy maiden bound
On the Pawnee's hunting ground--
He, upon his father's steed,
Hurrying at her cry of need--
Feels her arms around him thrown,
Feels her heart beat with his own,
And her soft breath, quick and low,
O'er his dark cheek come and go--
Hears behind the Pawnee yell
Fainter on the breezes swell--
Sees with joy the morning's beam
Flashing from his native stream,
As he drops his courser's rein
By the Kansas tent again."

John B. Dunbar, who, in relating the story, asserts that the captive was a Comanche girl, has preserved the Indian song in honor of Pit-a-le-shar´-u, the hero. The oft recurring portion

Lu! ti-wak´-o-le
We-tut-i-wit-a
Pit-a-le-shar´-u,

when translated, reads:

Well, he exclaimed,
You see I am come,
I, Pit-a-le-shar´-u.

Although among the fiercest of the prairie Indians, the Pawnees never carried on an organized war against the Government. They were, however, always on hostile terms with the Sioux, Kaws, Osages, Iowas, Sacs and Foxes.

In a beautiful wooded region, near the Missouri River, were the villages of the Iowas and Sacs. A vast extent of prairie reached west and southward. The Indians lived in huts of bark stretched over poles. Implements for out-door work consisted of the "squaw-axe" and hoe, purchased from traders. Iron camp kettles, wooden bowls and ladles were the only utensils for domestic use. The tribes still clung to barbarous customs when the Highland mission was founded; and their teacher

narrated that, at one time, a great feast was given in his honor. The principal article of food was a savory soup. He mentally congratulated himself on having been presented with a dish so pleasing to the taste that he might show due appreciation of the honor conferred upon him. Suddenly one of the hosts, in broken English, said:

"Dig deep, dig deep!" The guest did so, and dipped up a ladleful of white worms.

Missionaries found it difficult to check the wild propensities of their pupils; and the war of extermination continued until stopped by the United States Government. The diary of Father Irvin, who established the school, makes special mention of a war in 1839, and a skirmish in which nine Pawnees were slain near Arago, Nebraska. This was, doubtless, considered of great importance, inasmuch as the prowess of the Pawnees made it a difficult matter for less formidable warriors to win a victory, if the sides were equally divided as to numbers. Highland University is now located upon the war trail over which the party passed.

Like others of the Sioux family, the Iowas indulged in dances before setting forth on the war-path; and upon the return, the women executed the Scalp Dance, in which they carried, attached to poles, not only the scalps of enemies, but also fingers, toes and other mutilated portions of bodies.

During the period of general, if not united, efforts against the Pawnees, there was a conflict in which a small band was besieged on all sides, supposedly by the Sioux. The weaker party took refuge in a ravine, where the sunflowers grew tall, and, protected by the thick stalks, which turned the balls aside, made a brave fight for life. After repeated attacks, the assailants withdrew, bearing the body of their leader, who had been killed in the struggle. The Pawnees regained their town without the loss of a man.

As immigration increased, settlers took possession of parts of their reservation. It was the old, pitiful tale. The tribe, reduced by war and famine, relinquished its land and reluctantly departed for the Indian Territory. Being an agricultural as well as a courageous people, the last of the Pawnees have developed into excellent farmers. Maize, which was called A-ti´-ra (mother), proved, after all, to be their best friend.

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THE WANDERINGS OF VICRAM MAHARAJAH.

There was once upon a time a Rajah named Vicram Maharajah,[55] who had a Wuzeer named Butti.[56] Both the Rajah and his minister were left orphans when very young, and ever since their parents' death they had lived together: they were educated together, and they loved each other tenderly--like brothers.

[55] The great King Vicram.

[56] Light.

Both were good and kind--no poor man coming to the Rajah was ever known to have been sent away disappointed, for it was his delight to give food and clothes to those in need. But whilst the Wuzeer had much judgment and discretion, as well as a brilliant fancy, the Rajah was too apt to allow his imagination to run away with his reason.

Under their united rule, however, the kingdom prospered greatly. The Rajah was the spur of every noble work, and the Wuzeer the curb to every rash or impracticable project.

In a country some way from Rajah Vicram's there lived a little Queen, called Anar Ranee (the Pomegranate Queen). Her father and mother reigned over the Pomegranate country, and for her they had made a beautiful garden. In the middle of the garden was a lovely pomegranate tree, bearing three large pomegranates. They opened in the centre, and in each was a little bed. In one of them Anar Ranee used to sleep, and in the pomegranates on either side slept two of her maids.

Every morning early the pomegranate tree would gently bend its branches to the ground, and the fruit would open, and Anar Ranee and her attendants creep out to play under the shadow of the cool tree until the evening; and each evening the tree again bent down to enable them to get into their tiny, snug bed-rooms.

Many princes wished to marry Anar Ranee, for she was said to be the fairest lady upon earth: her hair was black as a raven's wing, her eyes like the eyes of a gazelle, her teeth two rows of exquisite pearls, and her cheeks the color of the rosy pomegranate. But her father and mother had caused her garden to be hedged around with seven hedges made of bayonets, so that none could go in or out; and they had published a decree that none should marry her but he who could enter the garden and gather the three pomegranates, in which she and her two maids slept. To do this, kings, princes and nobles innumerable had striven, but striven in vain.

Some never got past the first sharp hedge of bayonets; others, more fortunate, surmounted the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, or even the sixth; but there perished miserably, being unable to climb the seventh. None had ever succeeded in entering the garden.

Before Vicram Maharajah's father and mother died, they had built, some way from their palace, a very beautiful temple. It was of marble, and in the centre stood an idol made of pure gold. But in course of time the jungle had grown up round it, and thick straggling plants of prickly pear had covered it, so that it was difficult even to find out whereabouts it was.

Then, one day, the Wuzeer Butti said to Vicram Maharajah, "The temple your father and mother built at so much pains and cost is almost lost in the jungle, and will probably ere long be in ruins. It would be a pious work to find it out and restore it." Vicram Maharajah agreed, and immediately sent for many workmen, and caused the jungle to be cut down and the temple restored. All were much astonished to find what a beautiful place it was! The floor was white marble, the walls exquisitely carved in bas-reliefs and gorgeously colored, while all over the ceiling was painted Vicram Maharajah's father's name, and in the centre was a golden image of Gunputti, to whom it was dedicated.

The Rajah Vicram was so pleased with the beauty of the place that on that account, as well as because of its sanctity, he and Butti used to go and sleep there every night.

One night Vicram had a wonderful dream. He dreamed his father appeared to him and said, "Arise, Vicram, go to the tower for lights[57] which is in front of this temple."

[57] See Notes at the end.

(For there was in front of the temple a beautiful tower or pyramid for lights, and all the way up it were projections on which to place candles on days dedicated to the idol; so that when the whole was lighted it looked like a gigantic candlestick, and to guard it there were around it seven hedges made of bayonets.)

"Arise, Vicram, therefore," said the vision; "go to the tower for lights; below it is a vast amount of treasure, but you can only get it in one way without incurring the anger of Gunputti. You must first do in his honor an act of very great devotion, which if he graciously approve, and consent to preserve your life therein, you may with safety remove the treasure."

"And what is this act of devotion?" asked Vicram Maharajah.

"It is this," (he thought his father answered): "You must fasten a rope to the top of the tower, and to the other end of the rope attach a basket, into which you must get head downward, then twist the rope by which the basket is hung three times, and as it is untwisting, cut it, when you will fall head downward to the earth.

"If you fall on either of the hedges of bayonets, you will be instantly killed; but Gunputti is merciful--do not fear that he will allow you to be slain. If you escape unhurt, you will know that he has accepted your pious act, and may without danger take the treasure."[58]

[58] See Notes at the end.

The vision faded; Vicram saw no more, and shortly afterward he awoke.

Then, turning to the Wuzeer, he said, "Butti, I had a strange dream. I dreamed my father counseled me to do an act of great devotion; nothing less than fastening a basket by a rope to the top of the tower for lights, and getting into it head downward, then cutting the rope and allowing myself to fall; by which having propitiated the divinity, he promised me a vast treasure, to be found by digging under the tower! What do you think I had better do?"

"My advice," answered the Wuzeer, "is, if you care to seek the treasure, to do entirely as your father commanded, trusting in the mercy of Gunputti."

So the Rajah caused a basket to be fastened by a rope to the top of the tower, and got into it head downward; then he called out to Butti, "How can I cut the rope?" "Nothing is easier," answered he; "take this sword in your hand. I will twist the rope three times, and as it untwists for the first time let the sword fall upon it." Vicram Maharajah took the sword, and Butti twisted the rope, and as it first began to untwist, the Rajah cut it, and the basket immediately fell. It would have certainly gone down among the bayonets, and he been instantly killed, had not Gunputti, seeing the danger of his devotee, rushed out of the temple at that moment in the form of an old woman, who, catching the basket in her arms before it touched the bayonets, brought it gently and safely to the ground; having done which she instantly returned into the temple. None of the spectators knew she was Gunputti himself in disguise; they only thought "What a clever old woman!"

Vicram Maharajah then caused excavations to be made below the tower, under which he found an immense amount of treasure. There were mountains of gold, there were diamonds, and rubies, and sapphires, and emeralds, and turquoises, and pearls; but he took none of them, causing all to be sold and the money given to the poor, so little did

he care for the riches for which some men sell their bodies and souls.

Another day, the Rajah, when in the temple, dreamed again. Again his father appeared to him, and this time he said, "Vicram, come daily to this temple and Gunputti will teach you wisdom, and you shall get understanding. You may get learning in the world, but wisdom is the fruit of much learning and much experience, and much love to God and man; wherefore, come, acquire wisdom, for learning perishes, but wisdom never dies." When the Rajah awoke, he told his dream to the Wuzeer, and Butti recommended him to obey his father's counsel, which he accordingly did.

Daily he resorted to the temple and was instructed by Gunputti; and when he had learnt much, one day Gunputti said to him, "I have given you as much wisdom as is in keeping with man's finite comprehension; now, as a parting gift, ask of me what you will and it shall be yours--or riches, or power, or beauty, or long life, or health, or happiness--choose what you will have?" The Rajah was very much puzzled, and he begged leave to be allowed a day to think over the matter, and decide what he would choose, to which Gunputti assented.

Now it happened that near the palace there lived the son of a Carpenter, who was very cunning, and when he heard that the Rajah went to the temple to learn wisdom, he also determined to go and see if he could not learn it also; and each day, when Gunputti gave Vicram Maharajah instruction, the Carpenter's son would hide close behind the temple, and overhear all their conversation; so that he also became very wise. No sooner, therefore, did he hear Gunputti's offer to Vicram than he determined to return again when the Rajah did, and find out in what way he was to procure the promised gift, whatever it was.

The Rajah consulted Butti as to what he should ask for, saying, "I have riches more than enough; I have also sufficient power, and for the rest I had sooner take my chance with other men, which makes me much at a loss to know what to choose."

The Wuzeer answered, "Is there any supernatural power you at all desire to possess? If so, ask for that." "Yes," replied the Rajah, "it has always been a great desire of mine to have power to leave my own body when I will, and translate my soul and sense into some other body, either of man or animal. I would rather be able to do that than anything else." "Then," said the Wuzeer, "ask Gunputti to give you the power."

Next morning the Rajah, having bathed and prayed, went in great state to the temple to have his final interview with the idol. And the Carpenter's son went too, in order to overhear it.

Then Gunputti said to the Rajah, "Vicram, what gift do you choose?"

"Oh, divine Power," answered the Rajah, "you have already given me a sufficiency of wealth and power, in making me Rajah; neither care I for more of beauty than I now possess; and of long life, health and happiness I had rather take my share with other men. But there is a power which I would rather own than all that you have offered."

"Name it, O good son of a good father," said Gunputti.

"Most Wise," replied Vicram, "give me the power to leave my own body when I will, and translate my soul, and sense, and thinking powers into any other body that I may choose, either of man, or bird, or beast--whether for a day, or a year, or for twelve years, or as long as I like; grant also, that however long the term of my absence, my body may not decay, but that, when I please to return to it again, I may find it still as when I left it."

"Vicram," answered Gunputti, "your prayer is heard," and he instructed Vicram Maharajah by what means he should translate his soul into another body, and also gave him something which, being placed within his own body when he left it, would preserve it from decay until his return.[59]

[59] See Notes at the end.

The Carpenter's son, who had been all this time listening outside the temple, heard and learnt the spell whereby Gunputti gave Vicram Maharajah power to enter into any other body; but he could not see nor find out what was given to the Rajah to place within his own body when he left it, to preserve it; so that he was only master of half the secret.

Vicram Maharajah returned home, and told the Wuzeer that he was possessed of the much-desired secret. "Then," said Butti, "the best use you can put it to is to fly to the Pomegranate country, and bring Anar Ranee here."

"How can that be done?" asked the Rajah. "Thus," replied Butti; "transport yourself into the body of a parrot, in which shape you will be able to fly over the seven hedges of bayonets that surround her garden. Go to the tree in the centre of it, bite off the stalks of the pomegranates and bring them home in your beak."

"Very well," said the Rajah, and he picked up a parrot which lay dead on the ground, and placing within his own body the beauty-preserving charm, transported his soul into the parrot, and flew off.

On, on, on he went, over the hills and far away, until he came to the garden. Then he flew over the seven hedges of bayonets, and with his beak broke off the three pomegranates (in which were Anar Ranee and

her two ladies), and holding them by the stalks brought them safely home. He then immediately left the parrot's body and re-entered his own body.

When Butti saw how well he had accomplished the feat, he said, "Thank heaven! there's some good done already." All who saw Anar Ranee were astonished at her beauty, for she was fair as a lotus flower, and the color on her cheeks was like the deep rich color of a pomegranate, and all thought the Rajah very wise to have chosen such a wife.

They had a magnificent wedding, and were for a short time as happy as the day is long.

But within a little while Vicram Maharajah said to Butti, "I have again a great desire to see the world." "What!" said Butti, "so soon again to leave your home! So soon to care to go away from your young wife!"

"I love her and my people dearly," answered the Rajah; "but I cannot but feel that I have this supernatural power of taking any form I please, and longing to use it." "Where and how will you go?" asked the Wuzeer. "Let it be the day after to-morrow," answered Vicram Maharajah. "I shall again take the form of a parrot, and see as much of the world as possible."

So it was settled that the Rajah should go. He left his kingdom in the Wuzeer's sole charge, and also his wife, saying to her, "I don't know for how long I may be away; perhaps a day, perhaps a year, perhaps more. But if, while I am gone, you should be in any difficulty, apply to the Wuzeer. He has ever been like an elder brother or a father to me; do you therefore also regard him as a father. I have charged him to take care of you as he would of his own child."

Having said these words, the Rajah caused a beautiful parrot to be shot (it was a very handsome bird, with a tuft of bright feathers on its head and a ring about its neck). He then cut a small incision in his arm and rubbed into it some of the magic preservative given him by Gunputti to keep his body from decaying, and transporting his soul into the parrot's body, he flew away.

No sooner did the Carpenter's son hear that the Rajah was as dead, than, knowing the power of which Vicram Maharajah and he were alike possessed, he felt certain that the former had made use of it, and determined himself likewise to turn it to account. Therefore, directly the Rajah entered the parrot's body, the Carpenter's son entered the Rajah's body, and the world at large imagined that the Rajah had only swooned and recovered. But the Wuzeer was wiser than they, and immediately thought to himself, "Some one beside Vicram Maharajah must have become acquainted with this spell, and be now making use of it,

thinking it would be very amusing to play the part of Rajah for a while; but I'll soon discover if this be the case or no."

So he called Anar Ranee and said to her, "You are as well assured as I am that your husband left us but now, in the form of a parrot; but scarcely had he gone before his deserted body arose, and he now appears walking about, and talking, and as much alive as ever; nevertheless, my opinion is, that the spirit animating the body is not the spirit of the Rajah, but that some one else is possessed of the power given to him by Gunputti, and has taken advantage of it to personate him. But this it would be better to put to the proof. Do, therefore, as I tell you, that you may be assured of the truth of my words. Make to-day for your husband's dinner some very coarse and common currie, and give it to him. If he complains that it is not as good as usual, I am making a mistake; but if, on the contrary, he says nothing about it, you will know that my words are true, and that he is not Vicram Maharajah."

Anar Ranee did as the Wuzeer advised, and afterward came to him and said, "Father" (for so she always called him), "I have been much astonished at the result of the trial. I made the currie very carelessly, and it was as coarse and common as possible; but the Rajah did not even complain. I feel convinced it is as you say; but what can we do?"

"We will not," answered the Wuzeer, "cast him into prison, since he inhabits your husband's body; but neither you, nor any of the Rajah's relations, must have any friendship with, or so much as speak to him; and if he speak to any of you, let whoever it be, immediately begin to quarrel with him, whereby he will find the life of a rajah not so agreeable as he anticipated, and may be induced the sooner to return to his proper form."

Anar Ranee instructed all her husband's relations and friends as Butti had advised, and the Carpenter's son began to think the life of a rajah not at all as pleasant as he had fancied, and would, if he could, have gladly returned to his own body again; but, having no power to preserve it, his spirit had no sooner left it than it began to decay, and at the end of three days it was quite destroyed; so that the unhappy man had no alternative but to remain where he was.

Meantime, the real Vicram Maharajah had flown, in the form of a parrot, very far, far away, until he reached a large banyan tree, where there were a thousand other pretty pollies, whom he joined, making their number a thousand and one. Every day the parrots flew away to get food, and every night they returned to roost in the great banyan tree.

Now it chanced that a hunter had often gone through that part of the

jungle, and noticed the banyan tree and the parrots, and he said to himself, "If I could only catch the thousand and one parrots that nightly roost in that tree, I should not be so often hungry as I am now, for they would make plenty of very nice currie." But he could not do it, though he often tried; for the trunks of the tree were tall and straight, and very slippery, so that he no sooner climbed up a little way than he slid down again: however, he did not cease to look and long.

One day, a heavy shower of rain drove all the parrots back earlier than usual to their tree, and when they got there they found a thousand crows who had come on their homeward flight to shelter themselves there till the storm was over.

Then Vicram Maharajah Parrot said to the other parrots, "Do you not see these crows have all sorts of seeds and fruits in their beaks, which they are carrying home to their little ones? Let us quickly drive them away, lest some of these fall down under our tree, which, being sown there, will spring up strong plants and twine round the trunks, and enable our enemy the hunter to climb up with ease and kill us all."

But the other parrots answered, "That is a very far-fetched idea! Do not let us hunt the poor birds away from shelter in this pouring rain, they will get so wet." So the crows were not molested. It turned out, however, just as Vicram Maharajah had foretold; for some of the fruits and seeds they were taking home to their young ones fell under the tree, and the seeds took root and sprang up, strong creeping plants, which twined all round the straight trunks of the banyan tree, and made it very easy to climb.

Next time the hunter came by he noticed this, and saying, "Ah, my fine friends, I've got you at last," he, by the help of the creepers, climbed the tree, and set one thousand and one snares of fine thread among the branches; having done which he went away.

That night, when the parrots flew down on the branches as usual, they found themselves all caught fast prisoners by the feet.

"Crick! crick! crick!" cried they, "crick! crick! crick! Oh dear! oh dear! what shall we do? what can we do? Oh, Vicram Maharajah, you were right and we were wrong. Oh dear! oh dear! crick! crick! crick!"

Then Vicram said, "Did I not tell you how it would be? But do as I bid you, and we may yet be saved. So soon as the hunter comes to take us away, let every one hang his head down on one side, as if he were dead; then, thinking us dead, he will not trouble himself to wring our necks, or stick the heads of those he wishes to keep alive through his belt, as he otherwise would; but will merely release us, and throw us

on the ground. Let each one when there, remain perfectly still, till the whole thousand and one are set free, and the hunter begins to descend the tree; then we will all fly up over his head and far out of sight."

The parrots agreed to do as Vicram Maharajah Parrot proposed, and when the hunter came next morning to take them away, every one had his eyes shut and his head hanging down on one side, as if he were dead. Then the hunter said, "All dead, indeed! Then I shall have plenty of nice currie." And so saying, he cut the noose that held the first, and threw him down. The parrot fell like a stone to the ground, so did the second, the third, the fourth, the fifth, the sixth, the seventh, the eighth, the ninth, the tenth, and so on--up to the thousandth parrot. Now the thousandth and first chanced to be none other than Vicram; all were released but he. But, just as the hunter was going to cut the noose round his feet, he let his knife fall, and had to go down and pick it up again. When the thousand parrots who were on the ground, heard him coming down, they thought, "The thousand and one are all released, and here comes the hunter; it is time for us to be off." And with one accord they flew up into the air and far out of sight, leaving poor Vicram Maharajah still a prisoner.

The hunter, seeing what had happened, was very angry, and seizing Vicram, said to him, "You wretched bird! it's you that have worked all this mischief. I know it must be, for you are a stranger here, and different to the other parrots. I'll strangle you, at all events--that I will." But to his surprise, the parrot answered him, "Do not kill me. What good will that do you? Rather sell me in the next town. I am very handsome. You will get a thousand gold mohurs[60] for me."

[60] About $7,500.

"A thousand gold mohurs!" answered the hunter, much astonished. "You silly bird, who'd be so foolish as to give a thousand gold mohurs for a parrot?" "Never mind," said Vicram, "only take me and try."

So the hunter took him into the town, crying "Who'll buy? who'll buy? Come buy this pretty polly that can talk so nicely. See how handsome he is--see what a great red ring he has round his neck. Who'll buy? who'll buy?"

Then several people asked how much he would take for the parrot; but when he said a thousand gold mohurs, they all laughed and went away, saying "None but a fool would give so much for a bird."

At last the hunter got angry, and he said to Vicram, "I told you how it would be. I shall never be able to sell you." But he answered, "Oh yes, you will. See here comes a merchant down this way; I dare say he will buy me." So the hunter went to the merchant and said to him,

"Pray, sir, buy my pretty parrot." "How much do you want for him?" asked the merchant--"two rupees?"[61] "No, sir," answered the hunter; "I cannot part with him for less than a thousand gold mohurs." "A thousand gold mohurs!" cried the merchant, "a thousand gold mohurs! I never heard of such a thing in my life! A thousand gold mohurs for one little wee polly! Why, with that sum you might buy a house, or gardens, or horses, or ten thousand yards of the best cloth. Who's going to give you such a sum for a parrot? Not I, indeed. I'll give you two rupees and no more." But Vicram called out, "Merchant, merchant, do not fear to buy me. I am Vicram Maharajah Parrot. Pay what the hunter asks, and I will repay it to you--buy me only, and I will keep your shop."

[61] About $1.

"Polly," answered the merchant, "what nonsense you talk!" But he took a fancy to the bird, and paid the hunter a thousand gold mohurs, and taking Vicram Maharajah home, hung him up in his shop.

Then the Parrot took on him the duties of shopman, and talked so much and so wisely that every one in the town soon heard of the merchant's wonderful bird. Nobody cared to go to any other shop--all came to his shop, only to hear the Parrot talk; and he sold them what they wanted, and they did not care how much he charged for what he sold, but gave him whatever he asked; insomuch, that in one week the merchant had made a thousand gold mohurs over and above his usual weekly profits; and there Vicram Maharajah Parrot lived for a long time, made much of by everybody, and very happy.

It happened in the town where the merchant lived there was a very accomplished Nautch girl,[62] named Champa Ranee.[63] She danced so beautifully that the people of the town used always to send for her to dance on the occasion of any great festival.

[62] Dancing girl.

[63] The Champa Queen. "The Champa" (_Michelia champaca_) is a beautiful, sweet-scented yellow flower.

There also lived in the town a poor wood-cutter, who earned his living by going out far into the jungle to cut wood, and bringing it in every day, into the bazaar to sell.

One day he went out as usual into the jungle to cut wood, and being tired, he fell asleep under a tree and began to dream; and he dreamed that he was a very rich man, and that he married the beautiful Nautch girl, and that he took her home to his house, and gave his wife, as a wedding present, a thousand gold mohurs!

When he went into the bazaar that evening as usual to sell wood, he began telling his dream to his friends, saying, "While I was in the jungle I had such an absurd dream; I dreamed that I was a rich man, and that I married the Champa Ranee, and gave her as a wedding present a thousand gold mohurs!" "What a funny dream!" they cried, and thought no more of it.

But it happened that the house under which he was standing whilst talking to his friends was Champa Ranee's house, and Champa Ranee herself was near the window, and heard what he said, and thought to herself, "For all that man looks so poor, he has then a thousand gold mohurs, or he would not have dreamed of giving them to his wife; if that is all, I'll go to law about it, and see if I can't get the money."

So she sent out her servants and ordered them to catch the poor wood-cutter; and when they caught him, she began crying out, "Oh husband! husband! here have I been waiting ever so long, wondering what has become of you; where have you been all this time?" He answered, "I'm sure I don't know what you mean. You're a great lady and I'm a poor wood-cutter; you must mistake me for somebody else."

But she answered, "Oh no! don't you remember we were married on such and such a day! Have you forgotten what a grand wedding it was, and you took me home to your palace, and promised to give me as a wedding present a thousand gold mohurs? But you quite forgot to give me the money, and you went away, and I returned to my father's house till I could learn tidings of you; how can you be so cruel?"

The poor wood-cutter thought he must be dreaming, but all Champa Ranee's friends and relations declared that what she said was true. Then, after much quarreling, they said they would go to law about it; but the judge could not settle the matter, and referred it to the Rajah himself. The Rajah was no less puzzled than the judge. The wood-cutter protested that he was only a poor wood-cutter; but Champa Ranee and her friends asserted that he was, on the contrary, a rich man, her husband, and had had much money, which he must have squandered. She offered, however, to give up all claim to that, if he would only give her a thousand gold mohurs, which he had promised; and so suggested a compromise. The wood-cutter replied that he would gladly give the gold mohurs if he had them; but that (as he brought witnesses to prove) he was really and truly what he professed to be--only a poor wood-cutter, who earned two annas[64] a day cutting wood, and had neither palace nor riches nor wife in the world! The whole city was interested in this curious case, and all wondered how it would end; some being sure one side was right, and some equally certain of the other.

[64] Six cents.

The Rajah could make nothing of the matter, and at last he said: "I hear there is a merchant in this town who has a very wise parrot, wiser than most men are; let him be sent for to decide this business, for it is beyond me; we will abide by his decision."

So Vicram Maharajah Parrot was sent for, and placed in the court of justice, to hear and judge the case.

First he said to the wood-cutter, "Tell me your version of the story." And the wood-cutter answered, "Polly, Sahib, what I tell is true. I am a poor man. I live in the jungle, and earn my living by cutting wood and selling it in the bazaar. I never get more than two annas a day. One day I fell asleep and dreamed a silly dream--how I had become rich and married the Champa Ranee, and had given her as a wedding present a thousand gold mohurs; but it is no more true that I owed her a thousand gold mohurs, or have them to pay, than that I married her."

"That is enough," said Vicram Maharajah. "Now, dancing girl, tell us your story." And Champa Ranee gave her version of the matter. Then the Parrot said to her, "Tell me now where was the house of this husband of yours, to which he took you?" "Oh!" she answered; "very far away, I don't know how far, in the jungles." "How long ago was it?" asked he. "At such and such a time," she replied. Then he called credible and trustworthy witnesses, who proved that Champa Ranee had never left the city at the time she mentioned. After hearing whom, the Parrot said to her, "Is it possible that you can have the folly to think any one would believe that you would leave your rich and costly home to go a long journey into the jungle? It is now satisfactorily proved that you did not do it; you had better give up all claim to the thousand gold mohurs."

But this the Nautch girl would not do. The Parrot then called for a money-lender, and begged of him the loan of a thousand gold mohurs, which he placed in a great bottle, putting the stopper in, and sealing it securely down; he then gave it to the Nautch girl, and said, "Get this money if you can, without breaking the seal or breaking the bottle." She answered, "It cannot be done." "No more," replied Vicram Maharajah, "can what you desire be done. You cannot force a poor man, who has no money in the world, to pay you a thousand gold mohurs.

"Let the prisoner go free! Begone, Champa Ranee. Dancing girl! you are a liar and a thief; go rob the rich if you will, but meddle no more with the poor."

All applauded Vicram Maharajah Parrot's decision, and said, "Was ever such a wonderful bird!" But Champa Ranee was extremely angry, and said to him, "Very well, nasty polly; nasty, stupid polly! be assured

before long I will get you in my power, and when I do, I will bite off your head!"

"Try your worst, madam," answered Vicram; "but in return, I tell you this--I will live to make you a beggar. Your house shall be, by your own order, laid even with the ground, and you for grief and rage shall kill yourself."

"Agreed," said Champa Ranee; "we will soon see whose words come true--mine or yours;" and so saying, she returned home.

The merchant took Vicram Maharajah back to his shop, and a week passed without adventure; a fortnight passed, but still nothing particular happened. At the end of this time the merchant's eldest son was married, and in honor of the occasion, the merchant ordered that a clever dancing-girl should be sent for, to dance before the guests. Champa Ranee came, and danced so beautifully that every one was delighted; and the merchant was much pleased, and said to her, "You have done your work very well, and in payment you may choose what you like out of my shop or house, and it shall be yours--whether jewels or rich cloth, or whatever it is."

She replied, "I desire nothing of the kind: of jewels and rich stuffs I have more than enough, but you shall give me your pretty little parrot; I like it much, and that is the only payment I will take."

The merchant felt very much vexed, for he had never thought the Nautch girl would ask for the parrot which he was so fond of, and which had been so profitable to him; he felt he would rather have parted with anything he possessed than that; nevertheless, having promised, he was bound to keep his word, so, with many tears, he went to fetch his favorite. But Polly cried, "Don't be vexed, master; give me to the girl; I can take good care of myself."

So Champa Ranee took Vicram Maharajah Parrot home with her; and no sooner did she get there than she sent for one of her maids, and said, "Quick, take this parrot and boil him for my supper; but first cut off his head and bring it to me on a plate, grilled; for I will eat it before tasting any other dish."

"What nonsensical idea is this of our mistress," said the maid to another, as she took the parrot into the kitchen; "to think of eating a grilled parrot's head!" "Never mind," said the other; "you'd better prepare it as she bids you, or she'll be very cross." Then the maid who had received the order began plucking the long feathers out of Vicram Maharajah's wings, he all the time hanging down his head, so that she thought he was dead. Then, going to fetch some water in which to boil him, she laid him down close to the place where they washed the dishes. Now, the kitchen was on the ground floor, and there

was a hole right through the wall, into which the water used in washing the dishes ran, and through which all the scraps, bones, peelings and parings were washed away after the daily cooking; and in this hole Vicram Maharajah hid himself, quick as thought.

"Oh dear! oh dear!" cried the maid when she returned. "What can I do? what will my mistress say? I only turned my back for one moment, and the parrot's gone." "Very likely," answered the other maid, "some cat has taken it away. It could not have been alive, and flown or run away, or I should have seen it go; but never fear, a chicken will do very well for her instead."

Then they took a chicken and boiled it, and grilled the head and took it to their mistress; and she ate it, little bit by little bit, saying as she did so--

"Ah, pretty polly! so here's the end of you! This is the brain that thought so cunningly and devised my overthrow! this is the tongue that spoke against me! this is the throat through which came the threatening words! Aha! who is right now, I wonder?"

Vicram, in the hole close by, heard her and felt very much alarmed; for he thought, "If she should catch me after all!" He could not fly away, for all his wing feathers had been pulled out; so there he had to stay some time, living on the scraps that were washed into the hole in the washing of the plates, and perpetually exposed to danger of being drowned in the streams of water that were poured through it. At last, however, his new feathers were sufficiently grown to bear him, and he flew away to a little temple in the jungle some way off, where he perched behind the idol.

It happened that Champa Ranee used to go to that temple, and he had not been there long before she came there to worship her idol.

She fell on her knees before the image, and began to pray. Her prayer was that the god would transport her body and soul to heaven (for she had a horror of dying), and she cried, "Only grant my prayer--only let this be so, and I will do anything you wish--anything--anything."

Vicram Maharajah was hidden behind the image and heard her, and said--

"Champa Ranee Nautch girl, your prayer is heard!" (She thought the idol himself was speaking to her, and listened attentively.) "This is what you must do: sell all you possess, and give the money to the poor; you must also give money to all your servants and dismiss them. Level also your house to the ground, that you may be wholly separated from earth. Then you will be fit for heaven. Come, having done all I command you, on this day week to this place, and you shall be transported thither body and soul."

Champa Ranee believed what she heard, and forgetful of Vicram Maharajah Parrot's threat, hastened to do as she was bidden. She sold her possessions, and gave all the money to the poor; razed her house to the ground, and dismissed her servants; which being accomplished, on the day appointed she went to the temple, and sat on the edge of a well outside it, explaining to the assembled people how the idol himself had spoken to her, and how they would shortly see her caught up to heaven, and thus her departure from the world would be even more celebrated than her doings whilst in it. All the people listened eagerly to her words, for they believed her inspired, and to see her ascension the whole city had come out, with hundreds and hundreds of strangers and travelers, princes, merchants and nobles, from far and near, all full of expectation and curiosity.

Then, as they waited, a fluttering of little wings was heard, and a parrot flew over Champa Ranee's head, calling out, "Nautch girl! Nautch girl! what have you done?" Champa Ranee recognized the voice as Vicram's; he went on: "Will you go body and soul to heaven? have you forgotten polly's words?"

Champa Ranee rushed into the temple, and, falling on her knees before the idol, cried out, "Gracious Power, I have done all as you commanded; let your words come true; save me; take me to heaven."

But the Parrot above her cried, "Good-bye, Champa Ranee, good-bye; you ate a chicken's head, not mine. Where is your house now? where your servants and all your possessions? Have my words come true, think you, or yours?"

Then the woman saw all, and in her rage and despair, cursing her own folly, she fell violently down on the floor of the temple, and dashing her head against the stone, killed herself.

It was now two years since the Rajah Vicram left his kingdom; and about six months before, Butti, in despair of his ever returning, had set out to seek for him. Up and down through many countries had he gone, searching for his master, but without success. As good fortune would have it, however, he chanced to be one of those strangers who had come to witness the Nautch girl's translation, and no sooner did he see the Parrot which spoke to her than in him he recognized Vicram. The Rajah also saw him, and flew on to his shoulder, upon which Butti caught him, put him in a cage and took him home.

Now was a puzzling problem to be solved. The Rajah's soul was in the Parrot's body, and the Carpenter's son's soul in the Rajah's body. How was the latter to be expelled to make way for the former? He could not return to his own body, for that had perished long before. The Wuzeer knew not how to manage the matter, and determined therefore to await

the course of events.

It happened that the pretended Rajah and Butti each had a fighting ram, and one day the Rajah said to the Wuzeer, "Let us set our rams to fight to-day, and try the strength of mine against yours." "Agreed," answered the Wuzeer; and they set them to fight. But there was much difference in the two rams; for when Butti's ram was but a lamb, and his horns were growing, Butti had tied him to a lime tree, and his horns had got very strong indeed by constantly rubbing against its tender stem and butting against it; but the Carpenter's son had tied his ram, when a lamb, to a young teak tree, the trunk of which was so stout and strong that the little creature, butting against it, could make no impression on it, but only damaged and loosened his own horns.

The pretended Rajah soon saw, to his vexation, that his favorite's horns being less strong than its opponent's, he was getting tired, and beginning to lose courage, would certainly be worsted in the fight; so, quick as thought, he left his own body and transported his soul into the ram's body, in order to give it an increase of courage and resolution, and enable it to win.

No sooner did Vicram Maharajah, who was hanging up in a cage, see what had taken place, than he left the parrot's body and re-entered his own body. Then Butti's ram pushed the other down on its knees and the Wuzeer ran and fetched a sword, and cut off its head; thus putting an end, with the life of the ram, to the life of the Carpenter's son.

Great was the joy of Anar Ranee and all the household at recovering the Rajah after his long absence; and Anar Ranee prayed him to fly away no more as a parrot, which he promised her he would not do.

But the taste for wandering and love of an unsettled life did not leave him on his resuming his proper form; and one of the things in which he most delighted was to roam about the jungles near the palace by himself, without attendant or guide. One very sultry day, when he was thus out by himself, he wandered over a rocky part of the country, which was flat and arid, without a tree upon it to offer shelter from the burning sun. Vicram, tired with his walk, threw himself down by the largest piece of rock he could find to rest. As he lay there, half asleep, a little Cobra came out of a hole in the ground, and seeing his mouth wide open (which looked like some shady cranny in a rock), crept in and curled himself up in the Rajah's throat.

Vicram Maharajah called out to the Cobra, "Get out of my throat." But the Cobra said, "No, I won't go; I like being here better then under ground;" and there he stayed. Vicram didn't know what to do, for the Cobra lived in his throat and could not be got out. At times it would peep out of his mouth, but the moment the Rajah tried to catch it, it ran back again.

"Who ever heard of a Rajah in such a miserable plight?" sighed he to Butti--"to think of having this Cobra in my throat!"

"Ah, my dear friend," Butti would answer, "why will you go roaming about the country by yourself? Will you never be cured of it?"

"If one could only catch this Cobra, I'd be content to wander no more," said the Rajah, "for my wandering has not brought me much good of late." But to catch the Cobra was more than any man could do. At last, one day, Vicram, driven nearly mad in this perplexity, ran away into the jungle. Tidings of this were soon brought to Butti, who was much grieved to hear it, and sighed, saying, "Alas! alas! of what avail to Vicram Maharajah is his more than human wisdom, when the one unlucky self-chosen gift neutralizes all the good he might do with it! It has given him a love of wandering hither and thither, minding everybody's business but his own; his kingdom is neglected, his people uncared for, and he, that used to be the pride of all Rajahs, the best, the noblest, has finally slunk out of his country, like a thief escaping from jail."

Butti sent messengers far and wide seeking Vicram Maharajah, but they could not find him; he then determined to go himself in search of his lost friend; and having made proper arrangements for the government of the country during his absence, he set off on his travels.

Meantime Vicram wandered on and on until at last, one day, he came to the palace of a certain Rajah, who reigned over a country very far from his own, and he sat down with the beggars at the palace gate.

Now, the Rajah at whose gate Vicram Maharajah sat had a good and lovely daughter, named Buccoulee.[65] Many Princes wished to marry this Princess, but she would marry none of them. Her father and mother said to her, "Why will you not choose a husband? Among all these Princes who ask you in marriage there are many rich and powerful--many handsome and brave--many wise and good; why will you refuse them all?" The Princess replied, "It is not my destiny to marry any of them; continually in my dreams I see my destined husband, and I wait for him." "Who is he?" they asked. "His name," she answered, "is the Rajah Vicram; he will come from a very far country; he has not come yet." They replied, "There is no Rajah, far or near, that we know of, of this name; give over this fancy of yours and marry some one else."

[65] Said to mean some sort of water-plant.

But she constantly refused, saying, "No, I will wait for the Rajah Vicram." Her parents thought, "It may be even as she says. Who knows but perhaps some day a great King, greater than any we know, may come to this country and wish to marry the girl; we shall then be glad that

we had not obliged her to marry any of her present suitors?"

No sooner had Vicram Maharajah come to the palace gate, and sat down there with the beggars, than the Princess Buccoulee, looking out of the window, saw him and cried, "There is the husband I saw in my dreams; there is the Rajah Vicram." "Where, child, where?" said her mother; "there's no Rajah there; only a parcel of beggars."

But the Princess persisted that one of them was the Rajah Vicram. Then the Ranee sent for Vicram Maharajah and questioned him.

He said his name was "Rajah Vicram." But the Rajah and Ranee did not believe him; and they were very angry with the Princess because she persisted in saying that he, and no other, would she marry. At last they got so enraged with her that they said, "Well, marry your beggar husband, if you will, but don't think to remain any longer our daughter after becoming his wife; if you marry him it shall be to follow his fortunes in the jungle; we shall soon see you repent your obstinacy."

"I will marry him and follow him wherever he goes," said the Princess.

So Vicram Maharajah and the Princess Buccoulee were married, and her parents turned her out of the house; nevertheless, they allowed her a little money. "For," they said, "she will fast enough find the difference between a king's daughter and a beggar's wife, without wanting food."

Vicram built a little hut in the jungle, and there they lived; but the poor Princess had a sad time of it, for she was neither accustomed to cook nor wash, and the hard work tired her very much. Her chief grief, however, was that Vicram should have such a hideous tormentor as the Cobra in his throat; and often and often of a night she sat awake, trying to devise some means for catching it, but all in vain.

At last, one night, when she was thinking about it, she saw close by two Cobras come out of their holes, and as they began to talk, she listened to hear what they would say.

"Who are these people?" said the first Cobra. "These," said the second, "are the Rajah Vicram, and his wife the Princess Buccoulee." "What are they doing here? why is the Rajah so far from his kingdom?" asked the first Cobra.

"Oh, he ran away because he was so miserable; he has a Cobra that lives in his throat," answered the second.

"Can no one get it out?" said the first.

"No," replied the other; "because they do not know the secret." "What secret?" asked the first Cobra. "Don't you know?" said the second; "why, if his wife only took a few marking nuts,[66] and pounded them well, and mixed them in cocoa-nut oil, and set the whole on fire, and hung the Rajah, her husband, head downward up in a tree above it, the smoke, rising upward, would instantly kill the Cobra in his mouth, which would tumble down dead."

[66] _Semecarpus anacardium._

"I never heard of that before," said the first Cobra.

"Didn't you?" exclaimed the second. "Why, if they did the same thing at the mouth of your hole, they'd kill you in no time; and then, perhaps, they might find all the fine treasure you have there!" "Don't joke in that way," said the first Cobra; "I don't like it;" and he crawled away quite offended, and the second Cobra followed him.

No sooner had the Princess heard this than she determined to try the experiment. So next morning she sent for all the villagers living near (who all knew and loved her, and would do anything she told them, because she was the Rajah's daughter), and bade them take a great cauldron and fill it with cocoa-nut oil, and pound down an immense number of marking nuts and throw them into it, and then bring the cauldron to her. They did so, and she set the whole on fire, and caused Vicram to be hung up in a tree overhead; and as soon as the smoke from the cauldron rose in the air it suffocated the Cobra in Vicram Maharajah's throat, which fell down quite dead. Then the Rajah Vicram said to his wife, "O worthy Buccoulee! what a noble woman you are! You have delivered me from this torment, which was more than all the wise men in my kingdom could do."

Buccoulee then caused the cauldron of oil to be placed close to the hole of the first Cobra, which she had heard speaking the night before, and he was suffocated.

She then ordered the people to dig him out of his hole, and in it they found a vast amount of treasure--gold, silver and jewels. Then Buccoulee sent for royal robes for herself and her husband, and bade him cut his hair and shave him; and when they were all ready, she took the remainder of the treasure and returned with it to her father's house; and her father and mother, who had repented of their harshness, gladly welcomed her back, and were both surprised and delighted to see all the vast treasures she had, and what a handsome, princely-looking man her husband was.

Then one day news was brought to Vicram that a stranger Wuzeer had arrived in the palace as the Rajah's guest, and that this Wuzeer had for twelve years been wandering round the world in search of his

master, but, not having found him, was returning to his own home. Vicram thought to himself, "Can this possibly be Butti?" and he ran to see.

It was indeed Butti, who cried for joy to see him, saying, "Oh Vicram, Vicram! do you know it is twelve years since you left us all?"

Then Vicram Maharajah told Butti how the good Princess Buccoulee had married him and succeeded in killing the Cobra, and how he was then on the point of returning to his own country. So they all set out together, being given many rich presents by Buccoulee's father and mother. At last after a long, long journey, they reached home. Anar Ranee was overjoyed to see them again, for she had long mourned her husband as dead. When Buccoulee Ranee was told who Anar Ranee was and taken to see her, she felt very much frightened, for she thought, "Perhaps she will be jealous of me and hate me." But with a gentle smile Anar Ranee came to meet her, saying, "Sister, I hear it is to you we owe the preservation of the Rajah, and that it was you who killed the Cobra; I can never be sufficiently grateful to you, nor love you enough, as long as I live."

From that day Vicram Maharajah stayed in his own kingdom, ruling it wisely and well, and beloved by all. He and Butti lived to a good old age, and their affection for each other lasted as long as they lived. So that it became a proverb in that country, and instead of saying, "So-and-so love each other like brothers" (when speaking of two who were much attached), the people would say, "So-and-so love each other like the Rajah and the Wuzeer."

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or Hindoo Fairy Legends Current in Southern India
Author: M. Frere
Contributor: Sir Bartle Frere
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INDIA, FRENCH, a general name for the French possessions in India--on the Coromandel coast, Pondicherry, Karikal and Yanaon; on the Malabar coast, Mahé; and in Bengal, Chandernagore. In addition there are a few "lodges" elsewhere, but they are merely nominal remnants of French factories. The total area amounts to 203 sq. m., of which 113 sq. m. belong to the territory of Pondicherry. In 1901 the total population amounted to 273,185. By decree of the 25th of January 1879 French India was provided with an elective general council and elective local councils. The results of this measure have not been very satisfactory, and the qualifications for and the classes of the franchise have been modified. The governor resides at Pondicherry, and is assisted by a council. There are two tribunals of first instance (at Pondicherry and Karikal), one court of appeal (at Pondicherry) and five justices of the peace. The agricultural produce consists of rice, earth-nuts, tobacco, betel nuts and vegetables.

History.--The first French expedition to India is believed to have taken place in the reign of Francis I., when two ships were fitted out by some merchants of Rouen to trade in eastern seas; they sailed from Havre in that year and were never afterwards heard of. In 1604 a company was granted letters patent by Henry IV., but the project failed. Fresh letters patent were issued in 1615, and two ships went to India, only one returning. _La Compagnie des Indes_ was formed under the auspices of Richelieu (1642) and reconstructed under Colbert (1664), sending an expedition to Madagascar. In 1667 the French India Company sent out another expedition, which reached Surat in 1668, where the first French factory in India was established. In 1672 Saint Thomé was taken, but the French were driven out by the Dutch and retired to Pondicherry (1674). In 1741 Dupleix became governor of Pondicherry and in 1744 war broke out between France and England; for the remaining history of the French in India see INDIA.

See Haurigot, _French India_ (Paris, 1887); Henrique, _Les Colonies françaises_ (Paris, 1889); Lee, _French Colonies_ (Foreign Office Report, 1900); _L'Année coloniale_ (Paris, 1900); and F. C. Danvers, _Records of the India Office_ (1887).

From: Title: Encyclopaedia Britannica, 11th Edition, Volume 14, Slice 4
"Independence, Declaration of" to "Indo-European Languages"
Author: Various
Release Date: June 27, 2012 [EBook #40096]

TAFFY AND TRICKSEY.

CAROLINE CROWNINSHIELD BASCOM.

A few of my readers may know who Taffy and Tricksey are, but as more will not I think it best to introduce them.

Taffy is the handsomest tiger cat I have ever seen, and as he has the crook in his tail, he belongs to the Tabby breed. Taffy is very large, usually weighing fourteen pounds, but he has a very small head, and very small, finely shaped paws. The under parts of them look like black velvet. In color he is jet black and the other fur very much like a raccoon's, light tan at the ends shading into yellow, then into drab. As the sun strikes him every hair seems full of light and he is one mass of iridescent colors. His marking is most beautiful. The top of his head is black branching out into five narrow black stripes down his neck. A black stripe three inches wide (without one light hair) going all the way down the back and to the end of the tail and under two inches; of course, on the tail the stripe is much narrower. Then, narrow black stripes go down each side of his back and tail. His tail is not long, but very bushy like a nice boa. I never saw more exquisite coloring and marking than Taffy has underneath, from his throat to his tail. His coat is beautifully soft and thick, and shines like satin, and his eyes are very green. He is particular about his toilet, but insists upon my helping him to keep it glossy. His own comb is kept on my dressing-table, and he asks me to comb him twice a day, and sometimes oftener.

I can tell you nothing of Taffy's antecedents, as I found him one morning in our back yard starved almost to death, and about as thick through the body as a shingle. At first I thought he had dropped down from Heaven, but I soon learned from his sayings and doings that he must have been quite intimate with the inmates of the lower region. I tempted him with chicken but it was some little time before I could put my hand on him; and to tame any animal you must be able to touch it with your hand. After two or three pats he seemed to realize that I was a good friend. Soon I had him in the house and for three years we have been devoted to each other. I have had a great many cats, but never one who had so much of the wild animal in him. All of my friends said I never could tame Taffy and it was many weeks before I had much influence over him, and I never feel quite sure now whether I am to be loved or scratched, as he still has the temper and the actions of a tiger when anything goes the wrong way.

He usually lies down like a tiger with legs straight out in front, tail straight out behind, and when I speak to him he will always blink his eyes and speak to me. If you touch him in passing he will grab at your

feet and spit and growl. He never mews when he wants anything to eat, but will chase me or my maid, and grab at our feet. If he does not like what is given him to eat, he will walk all about his plate, and scratch as if he were covering it up.

I am the only one Taffy ever shows much affection for, but to me he is very loving. He will lie as long as I will let him with his paws about my neck, and head on my shoulder. If he is sound asleep anywhere, and I begin to read aloud, sing, or whistle, he will get directly up, jump on my lap, put his paws about my neck, his face close to mine, and begin to purr. As he always looks very pleasant I flatter myself he likes the tone of my voice.

When I had my bird, Little Billie, it would make Taffy simply furious if I put him out of my room and closed the door. One morning he was so ugly my maid did not dare open the door to come in. After that when I wanted him to go down stairs, I had my maid come to the bottom of the stairs and call "Taffy!" then there was never any trouble. When he is in a tearing rage I can always quiet him, by taking tight hold of his paws, and kissing his eyes. I have told all of these things about Taffy so my readers will appreciate what I have been able to do with him. It is needless to say that when Little Billie went away, Taffy was the happiest cat in town. His devotion increased daily to me and he lived in my room, only going down to get something to eat.

I think by this time you are very well acquainted with Mr. Taffy, and I will present Tricksey to you. Of all the canary birds I have ever seen Tricksey is the prettiest, daintiest little bird you can possibly imagine. His color is light yellow with a much deeper shade between his wings, shading into almost an orange. His wings and tail are white with just a line of yellow on some of the feathers. His eyes are unusually large and bright, and his little legs and claws are very pink, and so slender they do not look strong enough to support his finely shaped body. Tricksey came from George H. Holden's, New York, so you will all know he is a very superior bird and sings like an angel.

Tricksey had never been out of his cage when he came to me, but before I had had him a week, he came out, perched on my finger, took things from my finger or mouth, would kiss me, and go all about my room on my finger, and very soon went all about the house with me. He was very fond of sweet apple, but I never let him have it inside his cage, but made him come to me for it. I kept a piece in a little dish on my table and he soon found out where it was and would help himself on the sly. I also kept on my table in a little china cup, some hemp seed which I gave to Tricksey as a great treat. Every time I would tap on the cup and make it ring, Tricksey would come out of his cage, down from a picture frame, or wherever he was, for a seed.

One day he had had his one hemp seed, and teased for more, but I said

"no" and he went flying about the room having a fine time. Soon he flew back on the table, hopped over to the cup, gave it two or three taps to make it ring, then hopped on to the top, reached down and helped himself to two seeds. Tricksey is a very vain little bird and likes nothing better than to go over on my dressing table, walk back and forth in front of the mirror or sit on my pin cushion and admire himself.

Tricksey came to me one afternoon and Taffy knew nothing about his arrival until the next morning. When he came upstairs and saw a little yellow bird in a house of gold, he was like the little girl's Bunnie, who "was not a bit afraid, but awfully much surprised," when she heard firecrackers for the first time. His eyes were like balls of fire, while his mouth opened and shut making a hissing sound, and his tail going at the rate of a mile a minute. He walked into my room like a wild tiger, with an air as much as to say, "If this is Little Billie come back dressed in yellow, die he must," and sprang at the cage. I took him firmly by the paws, looked straight into his big angry eyes and said in a soft, firm voice, "Taffy, this is Tricksey, and he is not to be eaten or hurt any more than my Little Billie who went away." I let go of his paws, he walked out of my room and downstairs without looking back. In about an hour I looked out into the hall, and there sat my dear old Taffy on the top step looking very meek and wishful. I spoke kindly to him and asked him to come in and see his new brother Tricksey. After a few moments he came in very slowly and went behind my bed. Soon he came from under the valance, (the cage sat on a chair and I in front of it) never looked at the cage, jumped into my lap, put his paws about my neck and began loving me. I took him to bed with me and he never moved until Tricksey began to sing in a most delightful way, then he looked at him and listened very intently. I talked to him, and "smoothed his feathers," and soon he snuggled down in my arms and went to sleep. When he got out of bed he never glanced at the cage, but went directly downstairs, and I felt I had made a good beginning. Everyone said I could never teach Taffy not to catch Tricksey, and the reason his catship did not kill Little Billie was because he was afraid of him, and so carefully watched. I knew there was not a place in the house I could hang the cage where Taffy could not get at it if he made up his mind to do so. Of course for days and weeks I felt anxious, and did not mean to leave them alone together. I never turned Taffy out of my room. If he went up to the cage and put up his paw I would say "Taffy, you must _not_ put your paw on the cage," and as he always minds he would take it right down, sit by the cage, and I would talk to him kindly. Fortunately Tricksey was not at all afraid of Taffy.

Taffy always wears a yellow satin collar with bells all around. Often I would hear him coming upstairs when I was lying down and I would keep very quiet to see what he would do. Sometimes he would come over to the cage, look at Tricksey pleasantly, then lie down by the fire and go to sleep; more often he would lie down without even looking at him. But

the moment he heard me talking to Tricksey he would get up and come to me to be petted, and I always gave him a great deal. One day when Taffy was in another room I let Tricksey out, and tried to be very quiet. I was sitting on the floor with Tricksey hopping about me. Before I hardly knew it Taffy was in my lap, and soon I had Tricksey on my knee eating seeds. If I took the cage on my lap with Tricksey inside Taffy would immediately jump up and crowd in between the cage and me.

Taffy was very much afraid the first time he saw Tricksey take his bath, and ran under the bed and peeped out from under the valance.

One morning the cage sat on the floor, and Tricksey was ready for his bath, when Taffy came in and sat close to the cage. Tricksey took a big drop of water into his bill and threw it into Taffy's face, Taffy moved back a little and looked all about to see where it came from. While he was looking Tricksey went into his bath, and splashed the water all over Taffy's face in a very roguish way. To say Taffy was surprised is speaking mildly. He turned to me with an angry cry and went out of the room. The next morning the same thing happened; but instead of going out of the room, he went on the other side, out of reach of the water, but where he could see all that went on.

After that he became so interested he did not mind if the water was splashed all over his face and would sit as close to the cage as he could get. While Tricksey was eating his breakfast he would lie down close to the cage and go to sleep. As I previously said I never meant to leave Taffy in the room with Tricksey, but he was often there hours before I knew it. When I found him he was always asleep in front of the cage or by the fire.

One morning after the bath I put the cage up in the window. Taffy did not seem to like it at all. He looked at me most wishfully, and began talking cat language, and I knew he was saying, "Please put Tricksey back on the floor." I did so, and Taffy began to sing, lay down with his back close to the cage, stretched out and went to sleep. He had been lying that way for an hour when some visitors came. It seemed too bad to disturb Taffy so I left him, and thought I would risk it.

Two hours passed before I went back, and you may imagine my delight when I found my two boys (so different in color, size and disposition) as happy as two kittens. Tricksey was singing merrily. Taffy had wakened, changed his position, and looked as if he felt very proud, being left to take care of his small brother. His eyes were as soft as velvet, and he spoke to me in a soft, cooing tone. Since then I have never felt there was any danger in leaving them together. I regret to say Tricksey has a strong will of his own and almost as bad a temper as Taffy.

At different times I had three wee baby birds brought in to me, but

they all died. Tricksey was very jealous of them, and when he saw me feeding them he would become very angry, beat his wings against his cage, and beg for me to let him out. One day I put one of the little strangers on the floor and let Tricksey out. He flew at the waif and tore feathers out of the top of his head. I took the poor little frightened thing in my hand. Tricksey flew on my finger and pecked at him. I put him in my other hand and Tricksey flew at him more angry than ever. Then I put him on the floor, and Tricksey was so happy he flew on my head, hopped about my shoulders and kissed me in the mouth. In the middle of the performance in walked dignified Mr. Taffy with a look which plainly said, "What more are you going to bring into this room?" He sat by my side looking at the newcomer and, before I knew what he was going to do, reached out his paw, and gave him a good slap which sent him off my lap onto the floor.

Early in the fall before I had any fire in my room I would bring Tricksey down in the morning and keep him until evening, and for two weeks Taffy never went near my room during the day, but stayed down there with Tricksey. The first day I had a fire in my room I did not bring Tricksey down as usual. After I gave Taffy his luncheon I missed him, but did not go to my room until five o'clock, and there was faithful Taffy sound asleep close to Tricksey's cage, and now he stays in my room all day. He has plainly shown that if Tricksey stays there he stays too.

I find that animals want to be treated very much like children. The more intelligent they are the easier it is to influence them, and the quicker they are to read you. First give them a great deal of love and kindness, always be firm, very patient, and above all _never_ deceive them in the most trivial thing. I hope this little sketch of Taffy's and Tricksey's life may be of some help to those who love cats and dogs, but have felt they could not teach them to live in harmony together.

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Author: Various
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A HUNT FOR THE NIGHTINGALE

While I lingered away the latter half of May in Scotland, and the first half of June in northern England, and finally in London, intent on seeing the land leisurely and as the mood suited, the thought never occurred to me that I was in danger of missing one of the chief pleasures I had promised myself in crossing the Atlantic, namely, the hearing of the song of the nightingale. Hence, when on the 17th of June I found myself down among the copses near Hazlemere, on the borders of Surrey and Sussex, and was told by the old farmer, to whose house I had been recommended by friends in London, that I was too late, that the season of the nightingale was over, I was a good deal disturbed.

"I think she be done singing now, sir; I ain't heered her in some time, sir," said my farmer, as we sat down to get acquainted over a mug of the hardest cider I ever attempted to drink.

"Too late!" I said in deep chagrin, "and I might have been here weeks ago."

"Yeas, sir, she be done now; May is the time to hear her. The cuckoo is done too, sir; and you don't hear the nightingale after the cuckoo is gone, sir."

(The country people in this part of England _sir_ one at the end of every sentence, and talk with an indescribable drawl.)

But I had heard a cuckoo that very afternoon, and I took heart from the fact. I afterward learned that the country people everywhere associate these two birds in this way; you will not hear the one after the other has ceased. But I heard the cuckoo almost daily till the middle of July. Matthew Arnold reflects the popular opinion when in one of his poems ("Thyrsis") he makes the cuckoo say in early June,--

> "The bloom is gone, and with the bloom go I!"

The explanation is to be found in Shakespeare, who says,--

> "The cuckoo is in June
> Heard, not regarded,"

as the bird really does not go till August. I got out my Gilbert White, as I should have done at an earlier day, and was still more disturbed to find that he limited the singing of the nightingale to June 15. But seasons differ, I thought, and it can't be possible that any class of feathered songsters all stop on a given day. There is a tradition that when George I. died the nightingales all ceased singing for the year out

of grief at the sad event; but his majesty did not die till June 21. This would give me a margin of several days. Then, when I looked further in White, and found that he says the chaffinch ceases to sing the beginning of June, I took more courage, for I had that day heard the chaffinch also. But it was evident I had no time to lose; I was just on the dividing line, and any day might witness the cessation of the last songster. For it seems that the nightingale ceases singing the moment her brood is hatched. After that event, you hear only a harsh chiding or anxious note. Hence the poets, who attribute her melancholy strains to sorrow for the loss of her young, are entirely at fault. Virgil, portraying the grief of Orpheus after the loss of Eurydice, says:--

"So Philomela, 'mid the poplar shade,
Bemoans her captive brood; the cruel hind
Saw them unplumed, and took them; but all night
Grieves she, and, sitting on a bough, runs o'er
Her wretched tale, and fills the woods with woe."

But she probably does nothing of the kind. The song of a bird is not a reminiscence, but an anticipation, and expresses happiness or joy only, except in those cases where the male bird, having lost its mate, sings for a few days as if to call the lost one back. When the male renews his powers of song, after the young brood has been destroyed, or after it has flown away, it is a sign that a new brood is contemplated. The song is, as it were, the magic note that calls the brood forth. At least, this is the habit with other song-birds, and I have no doubt the same holds good with the nightingale. Destroy the nest or brood of the wood thrush, and if the season is not too far advanced, after a week or ten days of silence, during which the parent birds by their manner seem to bemoan their loss and to take counsel together, the male breaks forth with a new song, and the female begins to construct a new nest. The poets, therefore, in depicting the bird on such occasions as bewailing the lost brood, are wide of the mark; he is invoking and celebrating a new brood.

As it was mid-afternoon, I could only compose myself till nightfall. I accompanied the farmer to the hay-field and saw the working of his mowing-machine, a rare implement in England, as most of the grass is still cut by hand, and raked by hand also. The disturbed skylarks were hovering above the falling grass, full of anxiety for their nests, as one may note the bobolinks on like occasions at home. The weather is so uncertain in England, and it is so impossible to predict its complexion, not only from day to day but from hour to hour, that the farmers appear to consider it a suitable time to cut grass when it is not actually raining. They slash away without reference to the aspects of the sky, and when the field is down trust to luck to be able to cure the hay, or get it ready to "carry" between the showers. The clouds were lowering and the air was damp now, and it was Saturday afternoon; but the farmer said they would never get their hay if they minded such things. The farm

had seen better days; so had the farmer; both were slightly down at the heel. Too high rent and too much hard cider were working their effects upon both. The farm had been in the family many generations, but it was now about to be sold and to pass into other hands, and my host said he was glad of it. There was no money in farming any more; no money in anything. I asked him what were the main sources of profit on such a farm.

"Well," he said, "sometimes the wheat pops up, and the barley drops in, and the pigs come on, and we picks up a little money, sir, but not much, sir. Pigs is doing well naow. But they brings so much wheat from Ameriky, and our weather is so bad that we can't get a good sample, sir, one year in three, that there is no money made in growing wheat, sir." And the "wuts" (oats) were not much better. "Theys as would buy hain't got no money, sir." "Up to the top of the nip," for top of the hill, was one of his expressions. Tennyson had a summer residence at Blackdown, not far off. "One of the Queen's poets, I believe, sir." "Yes, I often see him riding about, sir."

After an hour or two with the farmer, I walked out to take a survey of the surrounding country. It was quite wild and irregular, full of bushy fields and overgrown hedge-rows, and looked to me very nightingaly. I followed for a mile or two a road that led by tangled groves and woods and copses, with a still meadow trout stream in the gentle valley below. I inquired for nightingales of every boy and laboring-man I met or saw. I got but little encouragement; it was too late. "She be about done singing now, sir." A boy whom I met in a footpath that ran through a pasture beside a copse said, after reflecting a moment, that he had heard one in that very copse two mornings before,--"about seven o'clock, sir, while I was on my way to my work, sir." Then I would try my luck in said copse and in the adjoining thickets that night and the next morning. The railway ran near, but perhaps that might serve to keep the birds awake. These copses in this part of England look strange enough to American eyes. What thriftless farming! the first thought is; behold the fields grown up to bushes, as if the land had relapsed to a state of nature again. Adjoining meadows and grain-fields, one may see an inclosure of many acres covered with a thick growth of oak and chestnut sprouts, six or eight or twelve feet high. These are the copses one has so often heard about, and they are a valuable and productive part of the farm. They are planted and preserved as carefully as we plant an orchard or a vineyard. Once in so many years, perhaps five or six, the copse is cut and every twig is saved; it is a woodland harvest that in our own country is gathered in the forest itself. The larger poles are tied up in bundles and sold for hoop-poles; the fine branches and shoots are made into brooms in the neighboring cottages and hamlets, or used as material for thatching. The refuse is used as wood.

About eight o'clock in the evening I sallied forth, taking my way over the ground I had explored a few hours before. The gloaming, which at

this season lasts till after ten o'clock, dragged its slow length along. Nine o'clock came, and, though my ear was attuned, the songster was tardy. I hovered about the copses and hedge-rows like one meditating some dark deed; I lingered in a grove and about an overgrown garden and a neglected orchard; I sat on stiles and leaned on wickets, mentally speeding the darkness that should bring my singer out. The weather was damp and chilly, and the tryst grew tiresome. I had brought a rubber water-proof, but not an overcoat. Lining the back of the rubber with a newspaper, I wrapped it about me and sat down, determined to lay siege to my bird. A footpath that ran along the fields and bushes on the other side of the little valley showed every few minutes a woman or girl, or boy or laborer, passing along it. A path near me also had its frequent figures moving along in the dusk. In this country people travel in footpaths as much as in highways. The paths give a private, human touch to the landscape that the roads do not. They are sacred to the human foot. They have the sentiment of domesticity, and suggest the way to cottage doors and to simple, primitive times.

Presently a man with a fishing-rod, and capped, coated, and booted for the work, came through the meadow, and began casting for trout in the stream below me. How he gave himself to the work! how oblivious he was of everything but the one matter in hand! I doubt if he was conscious of the train that passed within a few rods of him. Your born angler is like a hound that scents no game but that which he is in pursuit of. Every sense and faculty were concentrated upon that hovering fly. This man wooed the stream, quivering with pleasure and expectation. Every foot of it he tickled with his decoy. His close was evidently a short one, and he made the most of it. He lingered over every cast, and repeated it again and again. An American angler would have been out of sight down stream long ago. But this fisherman was not going to bolt his preserve; his line should taste every drop of it. His eager, stealthy movements denoted his enjoyment and his absorption. When a trout was caught, it was quickly rapped on the head and slipped into his basket, as if in punishment for its tardiness in jumping. "Be quicker next time, will you?" (British trout, by the way, are not so beautiful as our own. They have more of a domesticated look. They are less brilliantly marked, and have much coarser scales. There is no gold or vermilion in their coloring.)

Presently there arose from a bushy corner of a near field a low, peculiar purring or humming sound, that sent a thrill through me; of course, I thought my bird was inflating her throat. Then the sound increased, and was answered or repeated in various other directions. It had a curious ventriloquial effect. I presently knew it to be the nightjar or goatsucker, a bird that answers to our whip-poor-will. Very soon the sound seemed to be floating all about me,--_Jr-r-r-r-r_ or _Chr-r-r-r-r_, slightly suggesting the call of our toads, but more vague as to direction. Then as it grew darker the birds ceased; the fisherman reeled up and left. No sound was now heard,--not even the

voice of a solitary frog anywhere. I never heard a frog in England. About eleven o'clock I moved down by a wood, and stood for an hour on a bridge over the railroad. No voice of bird greeted me till the sedge-warbler struck up her curious nocturne in a hedge near by. It was a singular medley of notes, hurried chirps, trills, calls, warbles, snatched from the songs of other birds, with a half-chiding, remonstrating tone or air running through it all. As there was no other sound to be heard, and as the darkness was complete, it had the effect of a very private and whimsical performance,--as if the little bird had secluded herself there, and was giving vent to her emotions in the most copious and vehement manner. I listened till after midnight, and till the rain began to fall, and the vivacious warbler never ceased for a moment. White says that, if it stops, a stone tossed into the bush near it will set it going again. Its voice is not musical; the quality of it is like that of the loquacious English house sparrows; but its song or medley is so persistently animated, and in such contrast to the gloom and the darkness, that the effect is decidedly pleasing.

This and the nightjar were the only nightingales I heard that night. I returned home, a good deal disappointed, but slept upon my arms, as it were, and was out upon the chase again at four o'clock in the morning. This time I passed down a lane by the neglected garden and orchard, where I was told the birds had sung for weeks past; then under the railroad by a cluster of laborers' cottages, and along a road with many copses and bushy fence-corners on either hand, for two miles, but I heard no nightingales. A boy of whom I inquired seemed half frightened, and went into the house without answering.

After a late breakfast I sallied out again, going farther in the same direction, and was overtaken by several showers. I heard many and frequent bird-songs,--the lark, the wren, the thrush, the blackbird, the whitethroat, the greenfinch, and the hoarse, guttural cooing of the wood-pigeons,--but not the note I was in quest of. I passed up a road that was a deep trench in the side of a hill overgrown with low beeches. The roots of the trees formed a network on the side of the bank, as their branches did above. In a framework of roots, within reach of my hand, I spied a wren's nest, a round hole leading to the interior of a large mass of soft green moss, a structure displaying the taste and neatness of the daintiest of bird architects, and the depth and warmth and snugness of the most ingenious mouse habitation. While lingering here, a young countryman came along whom I engaged in conversation. No, he had not heard the nightingale for a few days; but the previous week he had been in camp with the militia near Guildford, and while on picket duty had heard her nearly all night. "'Don't she sing splendid to-night?' the boys would say." This was tantalizing; Guildford was within easy reach; but the previous week,--that could not be reached. However, he encouraged me by saying he did not think they were done singing yet, as he had often heard them during haying-time. I inquired for the blackcap, but saw he did not know this bird, and thought I

referred to a species of tomtit, which also has a black cap. The woodlark I was also on the lookout for, but he did not know this bird either, and during my various rambles in England I found but one person who did. In Scotland it was confounded with the titlark or pipit.

I next met a man and boy, a villager with a stove-pipe hat on,--and, as it turned out, a man of many trades, tailor, barber, painter, etc.,--from Hazlemere. The absorbing inquiry was put to him also. No, not that day, but a few mornings before he had. But he could easily call one out, if there were any about, as he could imitate them. Plucking a spear of grass, he adjusted it behind his teeth and startled me with the shrill, rapid notes he poured forth. I at once recognized its resemblance to the descriptions I had read of the opening part of the nightingale song,--what is called the "challenge." The boy said, and he himself averred, that it was an exact imitation. The _chew, chew, chew_, and some other parts, were very bird-like, and I had no doubt were correct. I was astonished at the strong, piercing quality of the strain. It echoed in the woods and copses about, but, though oft repeated, brought forth no response. With this man I made an engagement to take a walk that evening at eight o'clock along a certain route where he had heard plenty of nightingales but a few days before. He was confident he could call them out; so was I.

In the afternoon, which had gleams of warm sunshine, I made another excursion, less in hopes of hearing my bird than of finding some one who could direct me to the right spot. Once I thought the game was very near. I met a boy who told me he had heard a nightingale only fifteen minutes before, "on Polecat Hill, sir, just this side the Devil's Punch-bowl, sir!" I had heard of his majesty's punch-bowl before, and of the gibbets near it where three murderers were executed nearly a hundred years ago, but Polecat Hill was a new name to me. The combination did not seem a likely place for nightingales, but I walked rapidly thitherward; I heard several warblers, but not Philomel, and was forced to conclude that probably I had crossed the sea to miss my bird by just fifteen minutes. I met many other boys (is there any country where boys do not prowl about in small bands of a Sunday?) and advertised the object of my search freely among them, offering a reward that made their eyes glisten for the bird in song; but nothing ever came of it. In my desperation, I even presented a letter I had brought to the village squire, just as, in company with his wife, he was about to leave his door for church. He turned back, and, hearing my quest, volunteered to take me on a long walk through the wet grass and bushes of his fields and copses, where he knew the birds were wont to sing. "Too late," he said, and so it did appear. He showed me a fine old edition of White's "Selborne," with notes by some editor whose name I have forgotten. This editor had extended White's date of June 15 to July 1, as the time to which the nightingale continues in song, and I felt like thanking him for it, as it gave me renewed hope. The squire thought there was a chance yet; and in case my man with the spear of grass behind his teeth

failed me, he gave me a card to an old naturalist and taxidermist at Godalming, a town nine miles above, who, he felt sure, could put me on the right track if anybody could.

At eight o'clock, the sun yet some distance above the horizon, I was at the door of the barber in Hazlemere. He led the way along one of those delightful footpaths with which this country is threaded, extending to a neighboring village several miles distant. It left the street at Hazlemere, cutting through the houses diagonally, as if the brick walls had made way for it, passed between gardens, through wickets, over stiles, across the highway and railroad, through cultivated fields and a gentleman's park, and on toward its destination,--a broad, well-kept path, that seemed to have the same inevitable right of way as a brook. I was told that it was repaired and looked after the same as the highway. Indeed, it was a public way, public to pedestrians only, and no man could stop or turn it aside. We followed it along the side of a steep hill, with copses and groves sweeping down into the valley below us. It was as wild and picturesque a spot as I had seen in England. The foxglove pierced the lower foliage and wild growths everywhere with its tall spires of purple flowers; the wild honeysuckle, with a ranker and coarser fragrance than our cultivated species, was just opening along the hedges. We paused here, and my guide blew his shrill call; he blew it again and again. How it awoke the echoes, and how it awoke all the other songsters! The valley below us and the slope beyond, which before were silent, were soon musical. The chaffinch, the robin, the blackbird, the thrush--the last the loudest and most copious--seemed to vie with each other and with the loud whistler above them. But we listened in vain for the nightingale's note. Twice my guide struck an attitude and said, impressively, "There! I believe I 'erd 'er." But we were obliged to give it up. A shower came on, and after it had passed we moved to another part of the landscape and repeated our call, but got no response, and as darkness set in we returned to the village.

The situation began to look serious. I knew there was a nightingale somewhere whose brood had been delayed from some cause or other, and who was therefore still in song, but I could not get a clew to the spot. I renewed the search late that night, and again the next morning; I inquired of every man and boy I saw.

"I met many travelers,
 Who the road had surely kept;
They saw not my fine revelers,--
 These had crossed them while they slept;
Some had heard their fair report,
In the country or the court."

I soon learned to distrust young fellows and their girls who had heard nightingales in the gloaming. I knew one's ears could not always be depended upon on such occasions, nor his eyes either. Larks are seen in

buntings, and a wren's song entrances like Philomel's. A young couple of whom I inquired in the train, on my way to Godalming, said Yes, they had heard nightingales just a few moments before on their way to the station, and described the spot, so I could find it if I returned that way. They left the train at the same point I did, and walked up the street in advance of me. I had lost sight of them till they beckoned to me from the corner of the street, near the church, where the prospect opens with a view of a near meadow and a stream shaded by pollard willows. "We heard one now, just there," they said, as I came up. They passed on, and I bent my ear eagerly in the direction. Then I walked farther on, following one of those inevitable footpaths to where it cuts diagonally through the cemetery behind the old church, but I heard nothing save a few notes of the thrush. My ear was too critical and exacting. Then I sought out the old naturalist and taxidermist to whom I had a card from the squire. He was a short, stout man, racy both in look and speech, and kindly. He had a fine collection of birds and animals, in which he took great pride. He pointed out the woodlark and the blackcap to me, and told me where he had seen and heard them. He said I was too late for the nightingale, though I might possibly find one yet in song. But he said she grew hoarse late in the season, and did not sing as a few weeks earlier. He thought our cardinal grosbeak, which he called the Virginia nightingale, as fine a whistler as the nightingale herself. He could not go with me that day, but he would send his boy. Summoning the lad, he gave him minute directions where to take me,--over by Easing, around by Shackerford church, etc., a circuit of four or five miles. Leaving the picturesque old town, we took a road over a broad, gentle hill, lined with great trees,--beeches, elms, oaks,--with rich cultivated fields beyond. The air of peaceful and prosperous human occupancy which everywhere pervades this land seemed especially pronounced through all this section. The sentiment of parks and lawns, easy, large, basking, indifferent of admiration, self-sufficing, and full, everywhere prevailed. The road was like the most perfect private carriage-way. Homeliness, in its true sense, is a word that applies to nearly all English country scenes; homelike, redolent of affectionate care and toil, saturated with rural and domestic contentment; beauty without pride, order without stiffness, age without decay. This people love the country, because it would seem as if the country must first have loved them. In a field I saw for the first time a new species of clover, much grown in parts of England as green fodder for horses. The farmers call it trifolium, probably _Trifolium incarnatum_. The head is two or three inches long, and as red as blood. A field of it under the sunlight presents a most brilliant appearance. As we walked along, I got also my first view of the British blue jay,--a slightly larger bird than ours, with a hoarser voice and much duller plumage. Blue, the tint of the sky, is not so common, and is not found in any such perfection among the British birds as among the American. My boy companion was worthy of observation also. He was a curious specimen, ready and officious, but, as one soon found out, full of duplicity. I questioned him about himself. "I helps he, sir; sometimes I shows people about, and sometimes

I does errands. I gets three a week, sir, and lunch and tea. I lives with my grandmother, but I calls her mother, sir. The master and the rector they gives me a character, says I am a good, honest boy, and that it is well I went to school in my youth. I am ten, sir. Last year I had the measles, sir, and I thought I should die; but I got hold of a bottle of medicine, and it tasted like honey, and I takes the whole of it, and it made me well, sir. I never lies, sir. It is good to tell the truth."
And yet he would slide off into a lie as if the track in that direction was always greased. Indeed, there was a kind of fluent, unctuous, obsequious effrontery in all he said and did. As the day was warm for that climate, he soon grew tired of the chase. At one point we skirted the grounds of a large house, as thickly planted with trees and shrubs as a forest; many birds were singing there, and for a moment my guide made me believe that among them he recognized the notes of the nightingale. Failing in this, he coolly assured me that the swallow that skimmed along the road in front of us was the nightingale! We presently left the highway and took a footpath. It led along the margin of a large plowed field, shut in by rows of noble trees, the soil of which looked as if it might have been a garden of untold generations. Then the path led through a wicket, and down the side of a wooded hill to a large stream and to the hamlet of Easing. A boy fishing said indifferently that he had heard nightingales there that morning. He had caught a little fish which he said was a gudgeon. "Yes," said my companion in response to a remark of mine, "they's little; but you can eat they if they _is_ little." Then we went toward Shackerford church. The road, like most roads in the south of England, was a deep trench. The banks on either side rose fifteen feet, covered with ivy, moss, wild flowers, and the roots of trees. England's best defense against an invading foe is her sunken roads. Whole armies might be ambushed in these trenches, while an enemy moving across the open plain would very often find himself plunging headlong into these hidden pitfalls. Indeed, between the subterranean character of the roads in some places and the high-walled or high-hedged character of it in others, the pedestrian about England is shut out from much he would like to see. I used to envy the bicyclists, perched high upon their rolling stilts. But the footpaths escape the barriers, and one need walk nowhere else if he choose.

Around Shackerford church are copses, and large pine and fir woods. The place was full of birds. My guide threw a stone at a small bird which he declared was a nightingale; and though the missile did not come within three yards of it, yet he said he had hit it, and pretended to search for it on the ground. He must needs invent an opportunity for lying. I told him here I had no further use for him, and he turned cheerfully back, with my shilling in his pocket. I spent the afternoon about the woods and copses near Shackerford. The day was bright and the air balmy. I heard the cuckoo call, and the chaffinch sing, both of which I considered good omens. The little chiffchaff was chiffchaffing in the pine woods. The whitethroat, with his quick, emphatic _Chew-che-rick_ or

Che-rick-a-rew, flitted and ducked and hid among the low bushes by the roadside. A girl told me she had heard the nightingale yesterday on her way to Sunday-school, and pointed out the spot. It was in some bushes near a house. I hovered about this place till I was afraid the woman, who saw me from the window, would think I had some designs upon her premises. But I managed to look very indifferent or abstracted when I passed. I am quite sure I heard the chiding, guttural note of the bird I was after. Doubtless her brood had come out that very day. Another girl had heard a nightingale on her way to school that morning, and directed me to the road; still another pointed out to me the whitethroat and said that was my bird. This last was a rude shock to my faith in the ornithology of schoolgirls. Finally, I found a laborer breaking stone by the roadside,--a serious, honest-faced man, who said he had heard my bird that morning on his way to work; he heard her every morning, and nearly every night, too. He heard her last night after the shower (just at the hour when my barber and I were trying to awaken her near Hazlemere), and she sang as finely as ever she did. This was a great lift. I felt that I could trust this man. He said that after his day's work was done, that is, at five o'clock, if I chose to accompany him on his way home, he would show me where he had heard the bird. This I gladly agreed to; and, remembering that I had had no dinner, I sought out the inn in the village and asked for something to eat. The unwonted request so startled the landlord that he came out from behind his inclosed bar and confronted me with good-humored curiosity. These back-country English inns, as I several times found to my discomfiture, are only drinking places for the accommodation of local customers, mainly of the laboring class. Instead of standing conspicuously on some street corner, as with us, they usually stand on some byway, or some little paved court away from the main thoroughfare. I could have plenty of beer, said the landlord, but he had not a mouthful of meat in the house. I urged my needs, and finally got some rye-bread and cheese. With this and a glass of home-brewed beer I was fairly well fortified. At the appointed time I met the cottager and went with him on his way home. We walked two miles or more along a charming road, full of wooded nooks and arbor-like vistas. Why do English trees always look so sturdy, and exhibit such massive repose, so unlike, in this latter respect, to the nervous and agitated expression of most of our own foliage? Probably because they have been a long time out of the woods, and have had plenty of room in which to develop individual traits and peculiarities; then, in a deep fertile soil, and a climate that does not hurry or overtax, they grow slow and last long, and come to have the picturesqueness of age without its infirmities. The oak, the elm, the beech, all have more striking profiles than in our country.

Presently my companion pointed out to me a small wood below the road that had a wide fringe of bushes and saplings connecting it with a meadow, amid which stood the tree-embowered house of a city man, where he had heard the nightingale in the morning; and then, farther along, showed me, near his own cottage, where he had heard one the evening

before. It was now only six o'clock, and I had two or three hours to wait before I could reasonably expect to hear her. "It gets to be into the hevening," said my new friend, "when she sings the most, you know." I whiled away the time as best I could. If I had been an artist, I should have brought away a sketch of a picturesque old cottage near by, that bore the date of 1688 on its wall. I was obliged to keep moving most of the time to keep warm. Yet the "no-see-'ems," or midges, annoyed me, in a temperature which at home would have chilled them buzzless and biteless. Finally, I leaped the smooth masonry of the stone wall and ambushed myself amid the tall ferns under a pine-tree, where the nightingale had been heard in the morning. If the keeper had seen me, he would probably have taken me for a poacher. I sat shivering there till nine o'clock, listening to the cooing of the wood-pigeons, watching the motions of a jay that, I suspect, had a nest near by, and taking note of various other birds. The song-thrush and the robins soon made such a musical uproar along the borders of a grove, across an adjoining field, as quite put me out. It might veil and obscure the one voice I wanted to hear. The robin continued to sing quite into the darkness. This bird is related to the nightingale, and looks and acts like it at a little distance; and some of its notes are remarkably piercing and musical. When my patience was about exhausted, I was startled by a quick, brilliant call or whistle, a few rods from me, that at once recalled my barber with his blade of grass, and I knew my long-sought bird was inflating her throat. How it woke me up! It had the quality that startles; it pierced the gathering gloom like a rocket. Then it ceased. Suspecting I was too near the singer, I moved away cautiously, and stood in a lane beside the wood, where a loping hare regarded me a few paces away. Then my singer struck up again, but I could see did not let herself out; just tuning her instrument, I thought, and getting ready to transfix the silence and the darkness. A little later, a man and boy came up the lane. I asked them if that was the nightingale singing; they listened, and assured me it was none other. "Now she's on, sir; now she's on. Ah! but she don't stick. In May, sir, they makes the woods all heccho about here. Now she's on again; that's her, sir; now she's off; she won't stick." And stick she would not. I could hear a hoarse wheezing and clucking sound beneath her notes, when I listened intently. The man and boy moved away. I stood mutely invoking all the gentle divinities to spur the bird on. Just then a bird like our hermit thrush came quickly over the hedge a few yards below me, swept close past my face, and back into the thicket. I had been caught listening; the offended bird had found me taking notes of her dry and worn-out pipe there behind the hedge, and the concert abruptly ended; not another note; not a whisper. I waited a long time and then moved off; then came back, implored the outraged bird to resume; then rushed off, and slammed the door, or rather the gate, indignantly behind me. I paused by other shrines, but not a sound. The cottager had told me of a little village three miles beyond, where there were three inns, and where I could probably get lodgings for the night. I walked rapidly in that direction; committed myself to a footpath; lost the trail, and brought up at a

little cottage in a wide expanse of field or common, and by the good woman, with a babe in her arms, was set right again. I soon struck the highway by the bridge, as I had been told, and a few paces brought me to the first inn. It was ten o'clock, and the lights were just about to be put out, as the law or custom is in country inns. The landlady said she could not give me a bed; she had only one spare room, and that was not in order, and she should not set about putting it in shape at that hour; and she was short and sharp about it, too. I hastened on to the next one. The landlady said she had no sheets, and the bed was damp and unfit to sleep in. I protested that I thought an inn was an inn, and for the accommodation of travelers. But she referred me to the next house. Here were more people, and more the look and air of a public house. But the wife (the man does not show himself on such occasions) said her daughter had just got married and come home, and she had much company and could not keep me. In vain I urged my extremity; there was no room. Could I have something to eat, then? This seemed doubtful, and led to consultations in the kitchen; but, finally, some bread and cold meat were produced. The nearest hotel was Godalming, seven miles distant, and I knew all the inns would be shut up before I could get there. So I munched my bread and meat, consoling myself with the thought that perhaps this was just the ill wind that would blow me the good I was in quest of. I saw no alternative but to spend a night under the trees with the nightingales; and I might surprise them at their revels in the small hours of the morning. Just as I was ready to congratulate myself on the richness of my experience, the landlady came in and said there was a young man there going with a "trap" to Godalming, and he had offered to take me in. I feared I should pass for an escaped lunatic if I declined the offer; so I reluctantly assented, and we were presently whirling through the darkness, along a smooth, winding road, toward town. The young man was a drummer; was from Lincolnshire, and said I spoke like a Lincolnshire man. I could believe it, for I told him he talked more like an American than any native I had met. The hotels in the larger towns close at eleven, and I was set down in front of one just as the clock was striking that hour. I asked to be conducted to a room at once. As I was about getting in bed there was a rap at the door, and a waiter presented me my bill on a tray. "Gentlemen as have no luggage, etc.," he explained; and pretend to be looking for nightingales, too!
Three-and-sixpence; two shillings for the bed and one-and-six for service. I was out at five in the morning, before any one inside was astir. After much trying of bars and doors, I made my exit into a paved court, from which a covered way led into the street. A man opened a window and directed me how to undo the great door, and forth I started, still hoping to catch my bird at her matins. I took the route of the day before. On the edge of the beautiful plowed field, looking down through the trees and bushes into the gleam of the river twenty rods below, I was arrested by the note I longed to hear. It came up from near the water, and made my ears tingle. I folded up my rubber coat and sat down upon it, saying, Now we will take our fill. But--the bird ceased, and, tarry though I did for an hour, not another note reached me. The prize

seemed destined to elude me each time just as I thought it mine. Still, I treasured what little I had heard.

It was enough to convince me of the superior quality of the song, and make me more desirous than ever to hear the complete strain. I continued my rambles, and in the early morning once more hung about the Shackerford copses and loitered along the highways. Two schoolboys pointed out a tree to me in which they had heard the nightingale, on their way for milk, two hours before. But I could only repeat Emerson's lines:--

"Right good-will my sinews strung,
But no speed of mine avails
To hunt up their shining trails."

At nine o'clock I gave over the pursuit and returned to Easing in quest of breakfast. Bringing up in front of the large and comfortable-looking inn, I found the mistress of the house with her daughter engaged in washing windows. Perched upon their step-ladders, they treated my request for breakfast very coldly; in fact, finally refused to listen to it at all. The fires were out, and I could not be served. So I must continue my walk back to Godalming; and, in doing so, I found that one may walk three miles on indignation quite as easily as upon bread.

In the afternoon I returned to my lodgings at Shotter Mill, and made ready for a walk to Selborne, twelve miles distant, part of the way to be accomplished that night in the gloaming, and the rest early on the following morning, to give the nightingales a chance to make any reparation they might feel inclined to for the neglect with which they had treated me. There was a footpath over the hill and through Leechmere bottom to Liphook, and to this, with the sun half an hour high, I committed myself. The feature in this hill scenery of Surrey and Sussex that is new to American eyes is given by the furze and heather, broad black or dark-brown patches of which sweep over the high rolling surfaces, like sable mantles. Tennyson's house stands amid this dusky scenery, a few miles east of Hazlemere. The path led through a large common, partly covered with grass and partly grown up to furze,--another un-American feature. Doubly precious is land in England, and yet so much of it given to parks and pleasure-grounds, and so much of it left unreclaimed in commons! These commons are frequently met with; about Selborne they are miles in extent, and embrace the Hanger and other woods. No one can inclose them, or appropriate them to his own use. The landed proprietor of whose estates they form a part cannot; they belong to the people, to the lease-holders. The villagers and others who own houses on leased land pasture their cows upon them, gather the furze, and cut the wood. In some places the commons belong to the crown and are crown lands. These large uninclosed spaces often give a free-and-easy air to the landscape that is very welcome. Near the top of the hill I met a little old man nearly hidden beneath a burden of furze. He was

backing it home for fuel and other uses. He paused obsequious, and listened to my inquiries. A dwarfish sort of man, whose ugliness was redolent of the humblest chimney corner. Bent beneath his bulky burden, and grinning upon me, he was a visible embodiment of the poverty, ignorance, and, I may say, the domesticity of the lowliest peasant home. I felt as if I had encountered a walking superstition, fostered beside a hearth lighted by furze fagots and by branches dropped by the nesting rooks and ravens,--a figure half repulsive and half alluring. On the border of Leechmere bottom I sat down above a straggling copse, aflame as usual with the foxglove, and gave eye and ear to the scene. While sitting here, I saw and heard for the first time the black-capped warbler. I recognized the note at once by its brightness and strength, and a faint suggestion in it of the nightingale's. But it was disappointing: I had expected a nearer approach to its great rival. The bird was very shy, but did finally show herself fairly several times, as she did also near Selborne, where I heard the song oft repeated and prolonged. It is a ringing, animated strain, but as a whole seemed to me crude, not smoothly and finely modulated. I could name several of our own birds that surpass it in pure music. Like its congeners, the garden warbler and the whitethroat, it sings with great emphasis and strength, but its song is silvern, not golden. "Little birds with big voices," one says to himself after having heard most of the British songsters. My path led me an adventurous course through the copses and bottoms and open commons, in the long twilight. At one point I came upon three young men standing together and watching a dog that was working a near field,--one of them probably the squire's son, and the other two habited like laborers. In a little thicket near by there was a brilliant chorus of bird voices, the robin, the song-thrush, and the blackbird, all vying with each other. To my inquiry, put to test the reliability of the young countrymen's ears, they replied that one of the birds I heard was the nightingale, and, after a moment's attention, singled out the robin as the bird in question. This incident so impressed me that I paid little attention to the report of the next man I met, who said he had heard a nightingale just around a bend in the road, a few minutes' walk in advance of me. At ten o'clock I reached Liphook. I expected and half hoped the inn would turn its back upon me again, in which case I proposed to make for Wolmer Forest, a few miles distant, but it did not. Before going to bed, I took a short and hasty walk down a promising-looking lane, and again met a couple who had heard nightingales. "It was a nightingale, was it not, Charley?"

If all the people of whom I inquired for nightingales in England could have been together and compared notes, they probably would not have been long in deciding that there was at least one crazy American abroad.

I proposed to be up and off at five o'clock in the morning, which seemed greatly to puzzle mine host. At first he thought it could not be done, but finally saw his way out of the dilemma, and said he would get up and undo the door for me himself. The morning was cloudy and misty, though

the previous night had been of the fairest. There is one thing they do not have in England that we can boast of at home, and that is a good masculine type of weather: it is not even feminine; it is childish and puerile, though I am told that occasionally there is a full-grown storm. But I saw nothing but petulant little showers and prolonged juvenile sulks. The clouds have no reserve, no dignity; if there is a drop of water in them (and there generally are several drops), out it comes. The prettiest little showers march across the country in summer, scarcely bigger than a street watering-cart; sometimes by getting over the fence one can avoid them, but they keep the haymakers in a perpetual flurry. There is no cloud scenery, as with us, no mass and solidity, no height nor depth. The clouds seem low, vague, and vapory,--immature, indefinite, inconsequential, like youth.

The walk to Selborne was through mist and light rain. Few bird voices, save the cries of the lapwing and the curlew, were heard. Shortly after leaving Liphook the road takes a straight cut for three or four miles through a level, black, barren, peaty stretch of country, with Wolmer Forest a short distance on the right. Under the low-hanging clouds the scene was a dismal one,--a black earth beneath and a gloomy sky above. For miles the only sign of life was a baker's cart rattling along the smooth, white road. At the end of this solitude I came to cultivated fields, and a little hamlet and an inn. At this inn (for a wonder!) I got some breakfast. The family had not yet had theirs, and I sat with them at the table, and had substantial fare. From this point I followed a footpath a couple of miles through fields and parks. The highways for the most part seemed so narrow and exclusive, or inclusive, such penalties seemed to attach to a view over the high walls and hedges that shut me in, that a footpath was always a welcome escape to me. I opened the wicket or mounted the stile without much concern as to whether it would further me on my way or not. It was like turning the flank of an enemy. These well-kept fields and lawns, these cozy nooks, these stately and exclusive houses that had taken such pains to shut out the public gaze,--from the footpath one had them at an advantage, and could pluck out their mystery. On striking the highway again, I met the postmistress, stepping briskly along with the morning mail. Her husband had died, and she had taken his place as mail-carrier. England is so densely populated, the country is so like a great city suburb, that your mail is brought to your door everywhere, the same as in town. I walked a distance with a boy driving a little old white horse with a cart-load of brick. He lived at Hedleigh, six miles distant; he had left there at five o'clock in the morning, and had heard a nightingale. He was sure; as I pressed him, he described the place minutely. "She was in the large fir-tree by Tom Anthony's gate, at the south end of the village." Then, I said, doubtless I shall find one in some of Gilbert White's haunts; but I did not. I spent two rainy days at Selborne; I passed many chilly and cheerless hours loitering along those wet lanes and dells and dripping hangers, wooing both my bird and the spirit of the gentle parson, but apparently without getting very near to either. When I think

of the place now, I see its hurrying and anxious haymakers in the field of mown grass, and hear the cry of a child that sat in the hay back of the old church, and cried by the hour while its mother was busy with her rake not far off. The rain had ceased, the hay had dried off a little, and scores of men, women, and children, but mostly women, had flocked to the fields to rake it up. The hay is got together inch by inch, and every inch is fought for. They first rake it up into narrow swaths, each person taking a strip about a yard wide. If they hold the ground thus gained, when the hay dries an hour or two longer, they take another hitch, and thus on till they get it into the cock or "carry" it from the windrow. It is usually nearly worn out with handling before they get it into the rick.

From Selborne I went to Alton, along a road that was one prolonged rifle-pit, but smooth and hard as a rock; thence by train back to London. To leave no ground for self-accusation in future, on the score of not having made a thorough effort to hear my songster, I the next day made a trip north toward Cambridge, leaving the train at Hitchin, a large picturesque old town, and thought myself in just the right place at last. I found a road between the station and the town proper called Nightingale Lane, famous for its songsters. A man who kept a thrifty-looking inn on the corner (where, by the way, I was again refused both bed and board) said they sang night and morning in the trees opposite. He had heard them the night before, but had not noticed them that morning. He often sat at night with his friends, with open windows, listening to the strain. He said he had tried several times to hold his breath as long as the bird did in uttering certain notes, but could not do it. This, I knew, was an exaggeration; but I waited eagerly for nightfall, and, when it came, paced the street like a patrolman, and paced other streets, and lingered about other likely localities, but caught nothing but neuralgic pains in my shoulder. I had no better success in the morning, and here gave over the pursuit, saying to myself, It matters little, after all; I have seen the country and had some object for a walk, and that is sufficient.

Altogether I heard the bird less than five minutes, and only a few bars of its song, but enough to satisfy me of the surprising quality of the strain.

It had the master tone as clearly as Tennyson or any great prima donna or famous orator has it. Indeed, it was just the same. Here is the complete artist, of whom all these other birds are but hints and studies. Bright, startling, assured, of great compass and power, it easily dominates all other notes; the harsher _chur-r-r-r-rg_ notes serve as foil to her surpassing brilliancy. Wordsworth, among the poets, has hit off the song nearest:--

"Those notes of thine,--they pierce and pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!"

I could easily understand that this bird might keep people awake at night by singing near their houses, as I was assured it frequently does; there is something in the strain so startling and awakening. Its start is a vivid flash of sound. On the whole, a high-bred, courtly, chivalrous song; a song for ladies to hear leaning from embowered windows on moonlight nights; a song for royal parks and groves,--and easeful but impassioned life. We have no bird-voice so piercing and loud, with such flexibility and compass, such full-throated harmony and long-drawn cadences; though we have songs of more melody, tenderness, and plaintiveness. None but the nightingale could have inspired Keats's ode,--that longing for self-forgetfulness and for the oblivion of the world, to escape the fret and fever of life.

"And with thee fade away into the forest dim."

From: Title: Fresh Fields
Author: John Burroughs
Release Date: November 8, 2013 [eBook #44127]

Ode to a Nightingale.

1.

My heart aches, and a drowsy numbness pains
 My sense, as though of hemlock I had drunk,
Or emptied some dull opiate to the drains
 One minute past, and Lethe-wards had sunk:
'Tis not through envy of thy happy lot,
 But being too happy in thine happiness,--
 That thou, light-winged Dryad of the trees,
 In some melodious plot
 Of beechen green, and shadows numberless,
 Singest of summer in full-throated ease.

2.

O for a draught of vintage! that hath been
 Cool'd a long age in the deep-delved earth,
Tasting of Flora and the country green,
 Dance, and Provençal song, and sunburnt mirth!
O for a beaker full of the warm South,
 Full of the true, the blushful Hippocrene,
 With beaded bubbles winking at the brim,
 And purple-stained mouth;
 That I might drink, and leave the world unseen,
 And with thee fade away into the forest dim:

3.

Fade far away, dissolve, and quite forget
 What thou among the leaves hast never known,
The weariness, the fever, and the fret
 Here, where men sit and hear each other groan;
Where palsy shakes a few, sad, last gray hairs,
 Where youth grows pale, and spectre-thin, and dies;
 Where but to think is to be full of sorrow
 And leaden-ey'd despairs,
 Where Beauty cannot keep her lustrous eyes,
 Or new Love pine at them beyond to-morrow.

4.

Away! away! for I will fly to thee,
 Not charioted by Bacchus and his pards,
But on the viewless wings of Poesy,
 Though the dull brain perplexes and retards:
Already with thee! tender is the night,
 And haply the Queen-Moon is on her throne,
 Cluster'd around by all her starry Fays;
 But here there is no light,
 Save what from heaven is with the breezes blown
 Through verdurous glooms and winding mossy ways.

5.

I cannot see what flowers are at my feet,
 Nor what soft incense hangs upon the boughs,
But, in embalmed darkness, guess each sweet
 Wherewith the seasonable month endows
The grass, the thicket, and the fruit-tree wild;
 White hawthorn, and the pastoral eglantine;
 Fast fading violets cover'd up in leaves;
 And mid-May's eldest child,
 The coming musk-rose, full of dewy wine,
 The murmurous haunt of flies on summer eves.

6.

Darkling I listen; and, for many a time
 I have been half in love with easeful Death,
Call'd him soft names in many a mused rhyme,
 To take into the air my quiet breath;
Now more than ever seems it rich to die,
 To cease upon the midnight with no pain,
 While thou art pouring forth thy soul abroad
 In such an ecstasy!
 Still wouldst thou sing, and I have ears in vain--
 To thy high requiem become a sod.

7.

Thou wast not born for death, immortal Bird!
 No hungry generations tread thee down;
The voice I hear this passing night was heard
 In ancient days by emperor and clown:
Perhaps the self-same song that found a path
 Through the sad heart of Ruth, when, sick for home,
 She stood in tears amid the alien corn;
 The same that oft-times hath
 Charm'd magic casements, opening on the foam
 Of perilous seas, in faery lands forlorn.

8.

Forlorn! the very word is like a bell
 To toll me back from thee to my sole self!
Adieu! the fancy cannot cheat so well
 As she is fam'd to do, deceiving elf.
Adieu! adieu! thy plaintive anthem fades
 Past the near meadows, over the still stream,
 Up the hill-side; and now 'tis buried deep
 In the next valley-glades:
 Was it a vision, or a waking dream?
 Fled is that music:--do I wake or sleep?

By John Keats
From: Title: The Hundred Best English Poems
Author: Various
Editor: Adam L. Gowans
Release Date: February 15, 2006 [eBook #17768]

A TRIP-WIRE.

If you're sneaking around on a night patrol,
Trying to miss each cock-eyed hole,
And you choke back a curse from the depths of your soul—
 It's a trip-wire.

If you think there isn't a thing around
Except the desolate, shell-torn ground,
And you stumble and roll like a spool unwound—
 It's a trip-wire.

If you know a murmur would give the alarm,
And you've smothered a cough in the crotch of your arm,
And then you go falling all over the farm—
 It's a trip-wire.

If it's cold and it's rainy and everything's mud,
And you're groping your way through a nice little flood,
And you stand on your head with an elegant thud—
 It's a trip-wire.

When silence is golden (for "news" is the quest),
And you're returning and stepping your best,
And your rifle goes part way and you go the rest—
 It's a trip-wire.

From: Title: Trench Ballads and Other Verses
Author: Erwin Clarkson Garrett
Release Date: July 31, 2012 [EBook #40379]

A DINNER-PARTY. - WAS IT A SUCCESS?
BY JOHN EDDY.

"The work of feeding, you must understand,
Was but a fraction of the work in hand."

Atlantic Monthly, November, 1872.

In the year of grace 1855 there resided at the fashionable end of one of the largest of our Eastern cities, a person who will be called for the purpose of this article Bernon Burchard. He is not a myth, but a veritable person. For fifteen years he had been a practising lawyer, and had risen to eminence in his profession. His personal appearance was fine and prepossessing. His mind was clear, vigorous, and well-stored with varied learning. His sense of honor was pure and discriminating, and like the president of the Jewish Sanhedrim in the days of Caius Cæsar, he "was had in reputation of all the people." He was blessed with a capacious soul, and seemed naturally inclined to acts of benevolence and generosity. In society he held the foremost rank, and was fitted by birthright, education, and taste for the highest social position. His noble nature, his wit and learning and generous flow of spirits, united to complete a most pleasing and model gentleman.

At this time, upon the old estate in Lancashire, England, from which the first of the Burchards in this country emigrated in 1630, there resided Winfield Burchard, who dispensed generous hospitality to all the American kindred who made pilgrimage to fatherland. Mr. Bernon Burchard in particular, of all the name, had special occasion for holding the said Winfield in lasting remembrance and esteem for the many and great favors bestowed upon him and his immediate family during a series of years,--favors which were rendered doubly pleasing because it was nearly certain from the age and infirmities of the host that the branch of the family on this side of the Atlantic would never have the opportunity of reciprocating the favors in kind.

At a certain period in the year first mentioned, when Bernon Burchard's enthusiasm was all aglow for his English namesake, there called upon him the Rev. Mr. Malcolm of Oxford, with a letter of introduction from Winfield, wherein he commended his nephew to the attention of Mr. Bernon for his many virtues and acquirements.

He was cordially received, and Mr. Bernon Burchard at once determined to show his new cousin every mark of consideration and attention, as some slight token of the regard in which he held the writer of the letter.

In personal appearance the Rev. Mr. Malcolm was of average height, of a lymphatic temperament, and of modest and retiring manners. His brown hair shaded bright hazel eyes, which under embarrassment or surprise flew about with remarkable rapidity, and occasionally gave his countenance a wildness of expression. He showed at least a smattering of a variety of knowledge; he had evidently enjoyed the acquaintance of many of the conspicuous men in Europe, and had the air of a man who had seen much of the world.

Among other efforts for the entertainment of the Rev. Mr. Malcolm, and the only one pertinent to the object of this article, was a grand dinner-party, which surpassed all others that had ever been given in the city, both for the elegance and sumptuousness of the feast and the wit and learning displayed by the distinguished guests, as well as in another particular which it is our purpose to unfold.

There were present, besides the Rev. Mr. Malcolm, a learned Doctor of Divinity, famous for his proficiency in the Hebrew language and in Rabbinical lore, and who was at times greatly embarrassed because of his inability to hold what he deemed a proper restraint over his risibles. There was also a professor of Greek literature, who delighted in the tragedies, especially of Euripides and Sophocles, but who had, nevertheless, a keen relish for the humorous. He was accustomed among scholars to quote certain old Latin and Greek authors who were seldom read, and it was a frequent remark among the learned, with a sly wink of the eye, that our professor had access to some books which other less favored literati had never seen. There was present a brace of literary gentlemen of ready memories and wits, who contributed largely to the enjoyment of the occasion, besides several lawyers of distinction, who as a class are always to be relied upon when festivity offers them a retainer; a Senator, who was grave and dignified; a Right Reverend, who was quite the contrary; a physiognomist and expert in handwriting, who was the gravest of all, and naturally so as he was intent on taking rather than making observations; and several others, who, to say the least, were good listeners.

In Vespasian's time entertainments were first given _præcise_, and Mr. Burchard's guests arrived at almost the same moment. As the physiognomist paid his respects to the host the Rev. Mr. Malcolm stood upon his right, and at the same moment the man who had the ordering of the feast, formerly called the butler, stood upon his left offering him a rolled-up napkin, which was the mode of announcing the readiness of the repast in the days of the Cæsars. This man with a napkin under his arm led the way to the dining-room, and Mr. Burchard brought up the rear, also an invariable rule for an "amphitrion" in the times of the gourmands.

While the _convives_ were passing through the hall, Mr. Sidney, the

physiognomist and expert, seemed disinclined to proceed. Mr. Burchard, supposing him to feel somewhat overawed in the presence of so wise a conclave, hurried him along, while Mr. Sidney whispered in his ear, "With all respect, sir, you are more blind than Bartimeus."

Mr. Sidney has been heretofore described in the pages of the _Atlantic Monthly_ in these words, "His counterpart in personal appearance you may find in the thoroughfares at any hour of the day. There is nothing about him to attract attention. He is nearly forty-five years of age, and weighs perhaps two hundred pounds. His face is florid and his hair sandy. His eyes are small, piercing, and gray. His motions are slow, and none are made without a purpose. The wrinkles in his lips are at right angles with his mouth, and a close observer might detect in his countenance self-reliance, and tenacity of will and purpose."

One of the most important personages present, and one who contributed largely to the success or non-success of the feast, was Mr. Burchard's major-domo Maguire, the same who handed the napkin to Mr. Burchard when Mr. Sidney entered the drawing-room. For eight years he had resided in the family, and had endeared himself to the whole household by the kindness of his heart, his devotion to the interests of his employer, and by his perfection of knowledge in every art which relates to an entertainment and the customs which prevail in refined society. He was small in stature, of dark complexion, smooth face, subdued expression of countenance, very quiet in his manners, and aged about forty-five.

The Rev. Mr. Malcolm, most tastefully attired, was seated on the right of the host, and said grace in the most approved English formula and with distinct enunciation. The Doctor of Divinity sat on the left. Beside his plate was a bill of fare beautifully executed in Hebrew (much to the surprise of the host and to the credit of Maguire). The doctor's attempt at translating the same into English afforded not a little amusement, he being not particularly successful in the effort. Indeed, he was so perplexed thereby when pressed by the Professor of Greek, that he could not conceal his annoyance, and the whole company were equally excited lest the professor should press the Rabbin so far as to mar the harmony of the occasion. It was beginning to be painfully embarrassing, when the doctor discovered beside the professor's plate a similar bill of fare equally well executed in Greek, and the doctor begged leave to inquire of him, "What is the difference between _artos_ (bread) and _azumos_ (biscuit), and in what respect do the _tyrontes_ and _dolyres_ and _typhes_ and _placites_ and _melitutes_ differ?"

The professor became at once so confused as to put the whole company and the Rabbin in particular in the best of humor and indeed in almost uncontrollable laughter.

"And what, if you please," further inquired the great Hebrew, "were those highly flavored _arto laganos_ and the _escarites_ which the Epicureans are said to have relished so highly that they could devour them even after the operation had become distressing?"

The professor's pale face had changed to the color of a lobster's back, and those who had been so painfully perplexed by the discomfiture of the doctor were now carried to the other extreme by beholding him tear the weapon from his own flesh and hurl it with such effect against the attacking party. Again the excitement was becoming too exquisite for enjoyment. Nothing could have been more graceful than the turn that was given to the conversation by the Rev. Mr. Malcolm in sliding it off into a description of the Athenian matrons and maidens vying with each other in the markets in the sale of their seventy-two different kinds of bread and the conventional phrases which they were accustomed to use. As Mr. Malcolm repeated the calls with graceful and descriptive action, and the professor, who had recovered his equanimity, interpreted readily, the whole company could see in their mind's eye the girls and the matrons in the market of Athens who more than seventeen hundred years ago had called aloud their "_melitutes_ sweetened with the delicious honey of Mount Hymettus, and _tyrontes_ made of flour baked with cheese." If there was any lack of dignity in the reverend gentleman in his vivacious description, or in the change of his voice to distinguish the girl from the woman, it was credited to his sagacity and readiness to turn a bold corner in order to efface the fear and apprehension that had preceded. It also gave our professor an opportunity to translate what a few moments before he had been too much confused to do.

Then came a glowing description of the venders of bread in ancient Rome and of the manners of the Ædiles in their daily round among the bakers and bread-stands. Here again Mr. Malcolm was exceedingly happy in his imitations both of the manners of the Ædiles and their remarks as they passed along, giving a _tableau vivant_ that was quite unique and very descriptive and enjoyable.

The Right Reverend who was present made a historical reference to King Numa, and in the same connection declared that bread-making was as old as the human race. Malcolm smiled, and looked about so queerly that one of our literary friends offered him a penny. He was evidently confused, and seemed in doubt when another offered to make it twopence.

"I have always supposed," said Malcolm very modestly, "that the Romans for five centuries were pultiphagists, and that Megalarte and Megalomanze were the first bread-makers," and then, not a little to the gratification of the professor, he quoted from an author whom the professor had before then enjoyed alone, and whom some of the company had thought to have been fictitious. He added that in Numa's time no

bread had been made, and he quoted again from some unheard-of philosopher who declared that "invalids would become numerous in Rome should they cease to be pultiphagists and become eaters of bread."

The countenance of the Right Reverend fell somewhat, and Malcolm and the professor drew closer together, and for a while took the lead of the conversation and in the entertainment of the company. The professor seemed enraptured at finding so proficient a Latin and Greek scholar, and one so familiar with the characters he had hitherto monopolized. Archilus, Acestius, Stephanus and Phisistion were superb. Mithaceus on Hotch-potch, Agis on Pickled Broom-buds, Hegesippus on Black-pudding, Crito on Soused Mackerel, were joyously hit off in turn, after which Malcolm began a description of the luxury of living in Trajan's reign.

The greatest of all cooks, Apicius, was introduced as the author of several of the dishes which had so graced the pending feast. Then followed the brilliant kitcheners of Rome when foreign luxury was introduced into the empire from Asia, and as the procession passed along in grand review, some of the _bon mots_ of each were repeated, followed by the hearty laugh of the guests. Of these Pantaleon, Epiricus, Epenetus, Zophon, Chius, and Tyndaricus, whom Pliny styled "the gulf of all youth," received the most attention.

Paulus Æmilius, whose three days' triumph in Rome was graced by the captive monarch of Macedonia, came in for his share of honor for his declaration that "there is equal skill in bringing an army into the field and the setting forth of a feast, inasmuch as one is to annoy your enemy and the other to please your friend."

Many instances of the great men of antiquity being engaged in cooking were recited: the cook of Charlemagne was the leader of his armies,--Patrocles, the geographer and governor of Syria under Seleucus and Antiochus, peeled onions,--the heroic Ulysses roasted a sirloin of beef,--the godlike Achilles washed cabbages,--Cincinnatus boiled the turnips upon which he dined,--the great Condé fried pancakes,--Curius Dentatus, who twice enjoyed the honors of a triumph, was found cooking peas in an earthen pot.

Then followed a description of the luxury brought to Rome after the conquest of Asia, with talk of the edicts of Archian, Faunian, Didian, and others for its suppression,--the expense of a single meal being limited by imperial mandate to _centenos asses_,--of the resistance offered to these decrees by Durenius and others, and of bills of fare (first introduced by Vitellius). Most of the company had heard enough of this kind of conversation, and had turned their attention to the professor, who seemed transported with delight, especially when Malcolm quoted from Diocles on sweet-breads, Hicesius on potted pigeons, and Dionysius on sugar sops.

From that day to the present time the professor has not ceased to inquire with profound admiration for that accomplished gentleman and ripe scholar and antiquarian, confidently expecting that he is yet to honor some of the great universities of the Old World, or that he is to be raised to some exalted position in the Church of England.

It would be very agreeable to the writer to be allowed to communicate some of the hits and repartees which were tossed about the table, and which are omitted because unnecessary to the question in hand. There was, however, one other subject discussed which awakened a lively interest and is appropriate to the sequence.

Mr. Malcolm started the inquiry whether it was consistent with the highest virtue and religion for a lawyer to accept a retainer and to act as counsel for a man accused of crime, when he knew or had reasonable cause to believe his client guilty of the offence charged. The lawyers, one and all, responded in the affirmative. Mr. Malcolm, as if in doubt, contented himself with inquiries. The Right Reverend and the Rabbin were decidedly opposed to the opinion of the bar. The subject was well discussed, and the lawyers carried all before them. All had given up the contest except the doctor, when Mr. Burchard inquired of him if he believed in capital punishment, and, receiving an affirmative nod, he proceeded: "You are aware that our laws require of every practitioner before he becomes a member of the legal profession that he shall take an oath that he will be faithful to his client?"

"Yes."

"And that our statutes provide that the court shall assign counsel to a criminal when he has not made that provision for himself?"

"Yes."

"And that the state at its own expense compels the attendance of the witnesses for the accused; and you approve these laws?"

"Yes."

"And once more, would you prefer that the court should hang a man accused of murder under a plea of guilty, or that the extreme penalty of the law should be enforced after a full hearing, and proof to the satisfaction of the jury beyond a reasonable doubt?"

After a moment's reflection the doctor replied that he should prefer that the death penalty should be carried into effect _only_ after a verdict of guilty and upon the fullest investigation, for, said he, "it may be that the accused has a very imperfect knowledge as to what

constitutes the offence charged; or he may be mistaken as to his duties and obligations; or, indeed, he may be laboring under a morbid condition of mind, so as to desire that his life may be legally taken, and I think I have known at least one such."

"Then," said Mr. Burchard, "have you not admitted so much as to make untenable your position, namely, that you approve the law which requires an attorney to be faithful to his client, the law which assigns counsel to the accused, the law which compels the attendance of the witnesses for the criminal at the expense of the state, and provides that the accused shall be executed _only_ after the fullest investigation? What is the object of these enactments? Undoubtedly the interest of the state and not primarily of the criminal. The state in its wisdom requires for its own safety, and lest it should commit the crime and the blunder of hanging an innocent man, that the whole truth should be known. How greatly would the government and jurisprudence suffer if a guiltless man should be executed? When, therefore, a lawyer assumes the defence of a known murderer he is complying with the commands of the statutes and is serving the best interests of the government when he compels the prosecuting officer to the proof of the offence; and not only so, he is serving justice itself and not the criminal only. Even the judges have no authority to punish, except these provisions of law are complied with and the offence be proved. Who has not heard of the indictment of the two Bournes in Vermont, and of their having pleaded guilty to the crime of murder, for which they were on the eve of being executed, when the supposed murdered man put in his appearance? How much better would justice have appeared had the defence been conducted by a tenacious, faithful, and conscientious lawyer instead of being conducted in such a bungling manner that the bones of a horse did duty for the bones of the supposed murdered man! That case has done better duty as a bugbear for a century than any other legal decision."

Mr. Burchard became quite warm, and made the assertion that he would never take a retainer, and afterwards, no matter what knowledge he should subsequently acquire, desert a client; and he doubted if a conscientious lawyer had a moral right to refuse to defend a brother mortal accused of crime. "For the refusal," said he, "proceeds upon the ground taken by the doctor, which substantially is that no defence ought to be made, but that sentence should be passed upon a real criminal whether the crime can be proved or not. And I am at a loss to discover how my friend the doctor can approve of the requirements of the statutes which have been referred to, and yet assert that honest, conscientious lawyers alone cannot comply with them."

Mr. Burchard, feeling that he had been somewhat more enthusiastic than the occasion demanded, changed the subject in this wise:

"You all remember that a certain firm in Philadelphia made a special

deposit of eighteen thousand dollars in gold in the Trust Company, and some expert thieves by means of a forged check obtained possession of the money. The manner of accomplishing the feat was peculiar and was most adroitly carried out. The thief drove so sharp a bargain for funds current in New Orleans that the cashier's mind was diverted from the genuineness of the check to the percentage of exchange to be realized by the operation. Many propositions were made on both sides which were not mutually satisfactory. At last the rogue told the cashier that rather than submit to imposition he would take the gold, and the eighteen thousand dollars were handed over to him in twenty-dollar gold-pieces. The forgery was not discovered till thirteen days after, when the depositor called for his special deposit. Immediately detectives were employed. One of them you have all seen. He is a personal friend of mine, and his ability in this department surpasses Vidocq's as much as Vidocq's was superior to that of an ordinary country constable. He judged, by an intuition that none of us can comprehend, that these rogues had carried their plunder to Baltimore, and thither he proceeded. For three months he prowled about that city by night and by day, his mind intent upon the one object of ascertaining some clew that should direct him to the discovery of the robber. At the end of twelve weeks he had made no progress, and returned to Philadelphia. There he continued some ten days, and became discontented and vexed at being baffled. Asserting that he felt certain that the thieves made Baltimore their head-quarters, he proceeded thither again. After ten days' further search, one evening as he was walking slowly past a newspaper-stand on the corner of a street, he observed a boy who wore no hat purchase a New York _Herald_ and give in exchange a twenty-dollar gold-piece. He followed the lad into a drinking-saloon in the rear of which was a gambling-room. He soon ascertained the proprietor's name, and learned that his family occupied the upper part of the house. He became acquainted with the proprietor's wife, and found that she was sister to the wife of C. B., who was that year the president of the association of rogues, he having been elected to that position at M. in the State of Indiana in the month of August. He also learned that her father resided about fifty miles from Baltimore. The detective was aware that this close corporation of rascals had nine directors, and, knowing the position of C. B. in the association and his connection with the proprietor of the saloon, and understanding also the method of distribution, he concluded that two thousand dollars fell in the division to C. B., and a like amount to the proprietor of the saloon. He left the saloon at midnight, and drove immediately to the residence of the father of the proprietor's wife, and arrived there between nine and ten o'clock on the following morning, meeting the old gentleman in his wagon between his house and the main road, from which it was distant about half a mile. The detective was also aware of a rule among these robbers, that any considerable sum of money stolen, less ten per cent, should be buried for two years; and, having ascertained only what has been above related, he felt sure of the fact that the old gentleman was the

keeper of one ninth, at least, of the money stolen. He also felt confident that he had gathered enough of the truth to make a powerful impression upon the man he had gone so far to see, and that if he was not altogether given over to the service of this band of bad men, he could state facts enough, which the old gentleman knew were profound secrets, to stagger his mind and arouse his conscience. After an interview of less than an hour this detective, by an art of which we cannot conceive, and by a magnetism and eloquence that no other man of my acquaintance ever possessed a tithe of, actually induced the father of these two women to dig up out of his garden two thousand dollars in twenty-dollar gold-pieces and hand them over to--my friend Mr. Sidney, _who sits at the other end of the table_. And not only so, but he prevailed upon the old gentleman to go with him to Baltimore in order to get possession of the other two thousand dollars held by the proprietor of the aforesaid saloon, which he also actually accomplished at a little inn about six miles from Baltimore, where the saloon-keeper and his wife met her father and my friend.

"Yesterday in the Supreme Court I had occasion to avail myself of Mr. Sidney's marvellous ability as an expert in handwriting. The case turned entirely upon his testimony, although some twenty witnesses testified on each side that they had seen the defendant write, and that, in their opinion, the signature was or was not genuine. Mr. Sidney did not arrive till the moment the case was about to be given to the jury, and I had no opportunity of conversing with him, except to ascertain that in his judgment the signature was not a forgery.

"After he took the witness-stand and had qualified himself as an expert in handwriting, the note in suit was handed him, and he was requested to state whether or not in his opinion the signature was genuine. It was some minutes before he responded. During the latter portion of the time of his silence his mind seemed intent upon something else. The presiding judge inquired of him if he intended to answer, when he replied:

"'I was considering the matter, not whether the signature was genuine, but how I could convince the jury of the truth of what I have to say. This signature is genuine. The man who wrote it is a moral and religious man, and has therefore forgotten that he executed it. He is aged forty-seven, stands five feet ten, is broad-shouldered, full-favored, with muscular hands, thick, hard, and small; he is a merchant and a bachelor, and finds it hard to give up when he has been mistaken. I judge that the man who sits at the other end of the table wrote his name to this note, and I think I can convince him of it, for his honest face corresponds to the morality of the signature. The jury will observe that the first letter of the name is written while the quill pen was full of ink, which was almost exhausted on the second letter and replenished on the third, and the operation is repeated five times. I think, also, that the writer was in poor health, and his

muscles relaxed when he wrote his name. I am of the opinion, therefore, that the signature was made while the writer was on his back and the nib of the pen was higher than the tip.'

"At this point of the testimony the face of the defendant against whose interest the witness was testifying became luminous, and he at once rose and declared that the statement of the expert was the truth, and that it had altogether passed from his mind till that moment.

"I hope now I shall have the pleasure of giving you such an entertainment that you will remember it for your lifetime; and I know whereof I affirm when I state that my friend here present will, one hundred times in succession and without a mistake, from a single specimen of the handwriting of an individual, give his age within two years, his height within an inch, his weight within ten pounds, his profession, whether married or single, his temperament and peculiarities, his moral character, whether--"

Mr. Sidney was here observed to shake his head in a most determined manner.

"Or if my friend," proceeded Mr. Burchard, "will give us the characteristics of some of our neighbors who may be passing, this company will be equally delighted and astonished, for I assert that he will invariably hit off the peculiarity of a man from a single glance better than any of us after ten years of intercourse and acquaintance."

Again Mr. Sidney shook his head, and the subject was not again referred to.

At a late hour the company separated, each asserting that he had never passed a more enjoyable evening.

The reader will understand that only fragments of the conversation are here given, and only such and so much as bear upon the question at the head of the article. The sparkle of the remainder might be somewhat dimmed by a repetition, but so agreeable was the flow of soul, so entertaining the wit, so electric the repartees, and so graceful the turns in the conversation when the joke began to be too practical, that the whole company, without reference to the compliment of the host, declared to each other, as they met for months and years after, that in their lifetime they had never realized such elegant luxury and such unmitigated pleasure in an entertainment.

Mr. Sidney again and again endeavored to speak a word confidentially to Mr. Burchard, but circumstances, and especially his devotion to Malcolm, prevented.

Both Malcolm and Sidney were to take the night train for New York, and the time of its departure was near at hand. At last Mr. Sidney bade the host good-night, saying he should see him again before many days, but hoped he would soon recover from the infirmity in his eyes. Mr. Malcolm was the last to leave.

* * * * *

Early on the following morning, while Mr. Burchard was at breakfast, he received the following note:

BERNON BURCHARD, ESQ.:--

MY DEAR SIR,--After leaving your hospitable mansion last night, and while I was hastening to the station to take the night train for New York, I was accosted by two watchmen who arrested me, as they say, for burglary, and have detained me at the police station till now. In order that I may keep my appointment in New York, I have waived a preliminary examination before the magistrate, and desire you will become my bail, that I may be immediately released to the important duties devolving upon me elsewhere. Before many days the occasion of my haste will be ascertained, and that it had no reference to the watchmen; and the prosecution will be voluntarily _nol prosed_.

Your friend and servant,
MALCOLM.

Mr. Burchard dropped his cup, and without communicating with his wife, hastened to the assistance of his relative, gave the required bail, and released his friend to proceed on his journey, all the while delighted with the thought that Winfield Burchard would sooner or later be informed that his letter of introduction was of some real value to his nephew.

Before his departure, Malcolm handed to Mr. Burchard a draft for one thousand dollars, not to secure him as his bail, as he said, but as a retainer for his defence should such a necessity ever arise, and Mr. Malcolm added with a forced smile, "It is most singular that I, who doubted the propriety, should so soon claim the benefit of your declaration of your duty made last evening, to which I have so suddenly become a convert, but I most devoutly trust that I may rely upon your assistance at a time of so great humiliation and perplexity."

To which Mr. Burchard replied that he should most gladly, to the utmost of his ability, labor incessantly for his guest and relative, but must insist that he should be left to do so of his own free will,

without reference to any pecuniary compensation, and out of the high regard in which he held his friend and benefactor Winfield Burchard.

To which Malcolm responded, "It would be an accommodation to me if you would take charge of the draft and collect the same and pass it to my credit, for I prefer not to carry about my person so large an amount of money."

The result was that Mr. Burchard retained the draft. He then proceeded to the offices of several daily newspapers and suppressed the report of the arrest, "for," said he to the editors, "by allowing it to appear you will greatly injure the reputation of one of the most pious and accomplished clergymen in the English Church, and I am fully aware of the reason of his haste when overtaken by the watchmen, for he had left my house but a few minutes before and was hastening to the train when the real rogues ran past him."

There was one scurrilous little journal among the newspapers at whose office Mr. Burchard neglected to call. In their next issue the following appeared:

> "_Another Robbery._ About two o'clock last night the dwelling of W---- H. B---- on B---- Street was burglariously entered, and a considerable amount of silver plate, jewelry, and other valuables taken and carried away. The loss is estimated at two thousand five hundred dollars. The daughter of Mrs. B---- heard the noise of the robbers as they left the house and gave the alarm. Two watchmen, who were in the immediate vicinity, gave chase, and one of the robbers, who gave his name as George Lathrop, not so swift of foot as the others, was overtaken and carried to the police station, where he waived an examination, gave the required bail of twelve thousand dollars, and is now at large. There were two other participators in the crime who outran the watchmen. Lathrop was observed to throw away something in his flight. A subsequent search discovered it to be a finely wrought mat of curious construction, the handiwork of Miss B----, which sufficiently identifies this one of the thieves with the transaction. The other two were subsequently arrested and held to bail in like amounts, but no part of the booty has yet been recovered. From the promptness with which bail was given, and the standing of the sureties, it would seem that these burglars are not only men of property, but are protected by men in high social position."

On reading the foregoing Mr. Burchard's indignation knew no bounds. He blamed himself for not having recollected the existence of that scurrilous journal, which now seemed more mean and contemptible than ever. Those persons who understood how great a control Mr. Burchard

had over his passions could nevertheless see that an earthquake was pent up in his bosom. He was almost beside himself with rage. When his indignation had somewhat subsided his pride and high sense of honor became equally disturbed. He feared that his guests of the previous evening might hear of the matter, and identify Malcolm with George Lathrop. Vexed almost beyond endurance, dejected and tormented almost beyond the rallying-point, he went to his house bewildered, and threw himself upon a lounge, and overcome by exhaustion fell asleep. When he awoke it was evening. He rose from his couch, seated himself before a bright wood fire, and looked intently into the coals. Snow was falling softly upon the pavements till the tramp of passing travellers became muffled and hushed. Maguire came into the library, and entered into conversation with Mr. Burchard concerning the entertainment of the previous evening, and finding that it was considered by him eminently successful, begged Mr. Burchard to give him a certificate which would secure him a similar place should anything ever occur by reason of which he should relinquish his present position. Whereupon Mr. Burchard turned to his writing-table and wrote as follows:

December, 1855.

> This is to certify that M. Maguire has resided in my family for eight years last past, and during all that period has conducted himself with the most perfect propriety, and has shown consummate skill as a kitchener, and in all matters pertaining to the order and etiquette of a feast has no superior, and I do cordially recommend him, in case he shall ever leave my employment, as an honest, upright, and faithful man, and worthy of my regard.
>
> BERNON BURCHARD.

This he handed to Maguire with the remark that if it was not sufficiently comprehensive he might dictate such an one as he desired and he would sign it. Maguire, perceiving that his employer was not in a talkative mood, quietly left the room. As he left, Mrs. Burchard came into the library and sat down to talk over the dinner-party. Both agreed that it was a great success, and that Maguire was a jewel. Mrs. Burchard began to laugh, and then asked, "Did you observe that pickle, my dear?"

"What about the pickle?"

"Why, the pickle which Mr. Malcolm took happened to have a cut nail extending the full length of it. Now, my dear, do you suppose that nail could have grown in the cucumber? Ha, ha! What an entertaining man he is, and what a fund of anecdote, and how well he tells a story; and yet I don't fancy him. Those bills of fare in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, how did--"

The door-bell rang and Mr. Sidney was announced. "Thank God!" exclaimed Mr. Burchard. So rejoiced was he that his whole frame trembled with emotion and tears trickled down his face. Grasping his hand with both his own, he asked, "You received my telegram, then?"

"No."

"Then what brought you here so soon?"

Mrs. Burchard perceiving the conversation was not free in her presence, quietly left the room, when Mr. Sidney assumed a grave demeanor and said: "Mr. Burchard, I have always believed you eminently an honorable and honest man, and do so still. Do you grant this of me?"

"Yes, but if you did not receive my telegram, what brought you here to-night, for I am aware of the necessity you are under to be elsewhere?"

"I told you I should soon return," said Mr. Sidney, "for I feared that you might compromise yourself to an unpardonable degree with the scamps by whom you have been surrounded, and the thought of it so weighed upon my mind that when I met the train at New Haven bound eastward I determined to come again to you and inform you of your peril."

"I am not aware that I am in any peril."

"If you were aware of it you would be safe, and your lack of knowledge is the reason of my return."

"Have you any information of what has transpired since last evening?" inquired Mr. Burchard.

"None, whatever."

"Then unburden yourself with the least possible delay, for I have been so harassed and tormented during this day as almost to be overwhelmed; and as you are aware that I hold your judgment in these matters akin to prophecy, I beg you will proceed, for I have pondered over and over again your meaning when you compared me, both at the beginning and ending of the company, to Bartimeus."

"First," said Mr. Sidney, "I wish you to understand that I have never before last night seen or heard of the two or three persons concerning whom I propose to speak, and I feel that I ought first to have your permission to say all that is in my mind, for it comes nearer home to you than you suppose."

"You have it; go on."

"If it be true that the heart of a man changeth his countenance, then it is absolutely certain to my mind that your clergyman is the most unmitigated scamp, and it may, with propriety, be said that he has no conscience at all, so perverted has it become. He is a gambler by profession, and a passer of counterfeit money, but his business is burglary. He has followed it for years, and had his mind not been on it for years, he could not have become so perfect in his craft. The one great quality demanded by his business is _patience_, and he has attained it. The most remarkable thing about him is his assurance. I never knew an instance of so bad a man having the audacity to appear in the company of gentlemen of refinement, and to say grace with a voice that had no heart in it. It is usually the last place that those of his craft seek, and I cannot yet comprehend how he wheedled you."

Mr. Burchard explained, as has been previously stated.

"And that Maguire of yours is as bad a woman as walks the earth."

"Woman!" exclaimed Mr. Burchard; "for eight years he has been one of the most faithful servants and upright men I ever knew."

"_Now, Mr. Burchard!_" said Mr. Sidney, looking him straight in the eye, "do you mean to tell me that you don't know Maguire is a woman?"

"I surely do not so suspect even."

"Then the blindness of Bartimeus was nothing to yours. Has she any beard? Has she a man's voice? Has she the figure of a man? Does she make any motions of body or limb like a man? Surely not. She is a woman, and has consummate art, more than any woman I ever saw save one. She consorts continually with thieves and robbers, and if you do not suspect it you ought to know it, and that is what has brought me here. Your house is on fire of hell, and you do not seem to apprehend it. Did you not notice at the table that she spilled some wine on the Reverend (?) Mr. Malcolm's head and white cravat, and do you suppose it was accidental? No, sir, they are better acquainted than you and I, for he did not start when it was done, but was conscious who did it. When I entered your drawing-room and saw you standing between these two graceless villains, I looked around me in order to ascertain how many of that stripe were present, and finding but one other, I concluded you had been imposed upon and that I would improve the opportunity to study human nature. I _should_ like to be informed how it came to pass that that reverend state's-prison bird obtained an invitation from you."

Mr. Burchard explained the method of the introduction by a letter from

his kinsman in England, as before stated.

"Have you the letter?"

The letter being produced, after a moment's examination he said: "Very well done. _Very_ well done. He is better at that than I supposed, yet many of the letters show more than one stroke of the pen. He is an Englishman, but learned to write in Germany. He was once a cook. He does not write Malcolm as if used to it, and that is an assumed name. Great nerve, assurance, self-reliance, and patience. Is fond of children. Has more conceit than his manners indicate, kind-hearted man and even generous in his way, but has no notion of truth or morals. Should say he had spent much of his time in Baden Baden and other like places. Is good at gambling, but burglary is his _forte_. Ah! yes, this specimen of his handwriting, if it is disguised, tells the whole story of his life. That was a pretty crowd, was it not? for me to show off, too, that I could read their characters in their faces."

"Is it possible?" soliloquized Mr. Burchard, "and my admirable Maguire his accomplice!"

Mr. Sidney asked for the last letters which he had received from Winfield Burchard, in order to compare the two, but examining his portfolio, all were gone.

Mr. Burchard then stated to Mr. Sidney what had transpired during the day,--Malcolm's arrest, the giving of bail, the suppression of the report in the newspapers, and the report which appeared in one of the journals, his acceptance of the draft of one thousand dollars, and some other particulars, when Mr. Sidney said,--

"Why were your eyes not opened by the fact that Malcolm did not give the same name to the watchmen as to you? That is an offence against the statute, and you know it, and an honest man, whether clergyman or boot-black, never descends to that. Besides, the robbery was committed, according to this account, more than an hour after the night train had gone to which your supposed relative was hastening. That mat also should have convinced you; and what an adept he was to have known enough of the forms of law to have waived a preliminary examination and to have secured you as bail before you had recovered from your dream! He managed well to get your opinion last night of the duty of lawyers to defend rogues. Mr. Burchard, you are harnessed. You must now defend that rascal. Your mouth is closed, you have pocketed a retainer. A thousand dollars' fee does not indicate light work, but seems to imply a strain upon your conscience. I once heard the ex-secretary of President Harrison's Cabinet decline a like amount because it implied too much for his honor."

Mr. Sidney touched a sensitive place. If Mr. Burchard had any

reputation or quality as a lawyer, it was for his unsullied integrity and keen sense of honor. The ability of Mr. Sidney in his department had not brought that comfort which Mr. Burchard had hoped for. His distress of mind was so great that Mr. Sidney judged he had gone beyond the limit of safety, and he quoted, "'Faithful are the wounds of a friend.' As your friend I open to your view the peril from which it is your duty to escape. If you are involved, extricate yourself with honor if you can, and if you cannot, then do no more than honor requires."

A long pause ensued. At length Mr. Burchard broke the silence by inquiring what evidence there was that Maguire was criminal.

"Because she gets the information for Malcolm, and draws plans of the houses which he intends to rob, and locates every piece of furniture in them so that he can enter the house and go through darkness to his objective point. He passes half his nights in her room. There the schemes are matured, and if you think her less criminal than Malcolm, you are welcome to your opinion."

"But what information can you give me upon which I can act?"

"She has deceived you in passing herself off as a man. She is in fellowship with Malcolm, while it is for her interest to be faithful to you, for by reason of being your man she has access to those houses which may be presumed to be profitable in the plundering. I cannot tell you any particular thing she has done, but I can send a message to the back door by reason of which she will fly from your house and never again show you her face."

"What message will you send?"

"I will write on a card these words, 'All is known, detectives are approaching.'"

"Do it," said Mr. Burchard, "and if he is honest he will show it to me and ask advice, and we will see if he will fly."

The card was delivered, no commotion followed. She was not seen to escape, though watch was set for the purpose. Search was made for her in vain. From the appearance of her room it was evident she had fled. It was months before she was heard from, and then the inquiry came from the chief of police in a Western city, "Did Mary Maguire, alias Sonsie Jane, alias Wily Mary, ever reside with Bernon Burchard? Is his certificate genuine?"

In the mean time Mr. Burchard was intensely excited by conflicting emotions and the discussion within himself concerning his duty. Could he retain the money and give information to the police? No. Did the

fraud of Malcolm vitiate his obligation to him? In some particulars, but not in all. Did his oath to be faithful to his client prevent him from withdrawing from the case till at least he had returned what he had received? Yes; but how could he return it, since it was doubtful if Malcolm would ever again appear?

Before Mr. Sidney left town it was arranged that he should ascertain the whereabouts of Malcolm if possible, and, as the attorney of Mr. Burchard as bail, bring him hither at all hazards, and confine him in jail to await his trial or till he should procure other securities. Mr. Sidney stipulated that Mr. Burchard should not on any account telegraph to him or any other person upon the subject, because that the telegram would certainly reach Malcolm, if he was a chief member of a gang of villians, before it did him or the person to whom it should be addressed. This injunction, however, escaped the mind of Mr. Burchard. As the time for Malcolm's trial drew near, he, Mr. Burchard, became nervous and care-worn. Learning through a New York detective that Malcolm was in that city, he at once telegraphed to his attorney there to seek out the detective and have Malcolm arrested.

The writer of this article, who was then aware that some great trouble shrouded the mind of Mr. Burchard, without knowing what it was, happened to be conversing with him on the street near his office door when the answer to the telegram arrived, and had the opportunity of reading it all except the signature. Before the message had been delivered to the attorney in New York, the answer came from Malcolm at New Orleans, printed upon a long strip of paper as follows:

"NEW ORLEANS, March --, 1856.

> "I never disappoint my bail. My thoughts on awful subjects roll, damnation and the dead, what horrors seize the guilty soul upon a dying bed. Lingering about these mortal shores she makes a long delay, till like a flood with rapid force, death sweeps the wretch away. Good for Doctor Watts. I have three weeks yet to spare."

How it was signed I am not aware. The envelope was marked "paid $32.75."

On the afternoon previous to the sitting of the court at which Malcolm was under bail to appear, he unexpectedly presented himself at Mr. Burchard's office. The conflicting emotions in Mr. Burchard's breast upon beholding him can well be imagined. Indignation for the imposition and forgery was most apparent. Vengeance was secondary, tempered by the fact that he had made his appearance, although not yet safe in jail. His soul burst forth in a holy horror of a man apparently incapable of entertaining a moral sentiment, and so brazen as not to appreciate his guilt. His presence so exasperated Mr.

Burchard that he rushed toward the door without any definite intention but to be rid of his visitor. Malcolm calmly placed his back against the closed door and said very coolly: "All this indignation is well enough before a jury, Mr. Burchard, and I read in your countenance what is passing in your mind, but it is wise to take men as they are and the world as it is, and not as it should be. I meet you to-day on equal terms. You claim something of me, and I of you. If you are a man of honor, fulfil your contract. If you are a sneak, do as I should have done had I forfeited my bail. I have shown the estimate I put upon my duty by appearing to discharge you as my bail in the face of the indignity I have put upon you, and knowing full well what I was to encounter. Show half my pluck and it will serve you well. I am not yet your prisoner, and by the Eternal! I will not be till to-morrow, when I shall be content with that position. On your peril answer me. Will you fulfil your agreement? Will you be a man or a knave?"

Mr. Burchard answered not, but saw the desperate nature of the man with whom he had to deal, and that he was provided with weapons with which to enforce his argument. Malcolm proceeded, "I never was and never will be a sneak. I am bound by honor as well as you. You are a lawyer, and a good one. I am a burglar, sir, and am not ashamed of my jobs. You exalt your profession, and so do I mine. Business is business, and mine is as honorable as yours. Think you I am less public-spirited than you? Think you I love my wife and children less than you? Come, come, Mr. Burchard; down from your perch! You are a man of principle. I am no sardine. You have taken my money, and you cannot return it if you would, for the bankers upon whom it was drawn have failed, and the draft has not been presented and is your loss. I know what you would like to say. It is true I used dissimulation and procured an invitation to your dinner-party, and here is Winfield Burchard's letter to you (presenting it), whose handwriting I imitated; but it was all in my line. I laid a bet I could do it, and that draft was just the sum I won. Bristol Bill pays up like gentle folks, but then he didn't know my opportunities. What possessed you to dismiss Maguire? but no matter; that is all gone by. During the last eight years I have passed at least six hundred nights in your house, and have been very frequently in your sleeping-room, and have heard your confidential talk with your wife. Doubt it, do you? Yes, your door _was_ always bolted on the inside, and no other one opened into your chamber, but I can tell you conversations you had with your wife, which will convince you. Do you remember one night when your wife became nervous and fell to crying lest the pain she felt in her breast should prove to be a cancer, and you told her that you would go to Boston with her and consult Dr. Jackson and ask Dr. P. to go with you? Do, eh? And do you remember one night when your niece slept upon the sofa in your room? I had no idea she was there, and needlessly waked her. She screamed, and while you was attending to her fright I slipped out and didn't leave your door bolted. I heard you tell her she was dreaming.

"And do you remember one night telling your wife that you could not imagine how three cigars got out of a new box you had opened the night before? Those cigars were the only things that either Maguire or I ever took from your house.

"I will make you this proposition, and if you will accept it you will do well. By the night train my two accomplices in that job will arrive. I don't intend to be shut up till they come. I will pay for six men to sit up with me here to-night in this office, and you shall select them, and in the morning I will pay their fees and go to jail."

The proposition was accepted, and the chief of police furnished the keepers.

During that night Mr. Burchard's office was the scene of strange revelations. Malcolm furnished money to one of the officers, who brought in a basket of champagne, and ordered a supper at one o'clock in the morning, to be the most complete that money could buy and the city furnish. The officers were at liberty to invite in their friends who were reliable. Malcolm distributed to each of his keepers five times the sum of money agreed upon for their wages, and demanded of them a faithful performance of their duty. Some thirty had entered the office, and the door was closed and not to be opened on any account till supper was announced. Malcolm had sent to a neighboring bookstore, and obtained one pack of every edition of playing cards there kept for sale. Some forty packs with different backs were piled up at one end of the table. Malcolm invited some one to take a hand of euchre with him. The captain, who was considered the most expert player, took a chair at the corner of the table, and the rest were to observe the game, but say nothing which they should discover till the game was over. Malcolm took one of the packs from the envelope and said, "This edition was gotten up by Count ---- at ----, and with it he played twenty-one nights and won ---- thousand dollars before the markings were discovered. Cut the cards if you please, and mind, if you can, that the ten of spades is not turned." The cards were dealt and the ten of spades was turned. The two bowers and two aces were given to the captain, who ordered up the ten.

"Now, captain, I have given you the bowers and two aces, and yet you are euchred." And so it was. Malcolm inquired if any one perceived how it was done, and, receiving a negative reply, said, "Very well, he shall do precisely the same thing, and see then if you detect the method. I will cut for a ten to be turned and order it up, and you will observe."

Almost the same cards were put into Malcolm's hand, as had been put into the captain's.

"Now," said Malcolm, "I order it up, and will make one," and so it was.

"Did any of you see how that was done?"

None could detect. The cards were again shuffled by a looker-on. It was Malcolm's deal.

"I must not make too often. This time you shall march. You see I have given you three trumps and a king and an ace of another suit." And so it was.

The cards were shuffled again. "You must make one this time." And so it was.

"Now," said Malcolm, "please say whether I shall make one, or lose one, or go out."

It was the captain's deal, and the company requested Malcolm to go out if he could.

"Very well then, I cut a bower; the left is next above it as they fell into the last hand, and so will not be out."

Malcolm ordered up a queen, took it out with a king, and made three low clubs and won the game.

"Let's take another pack while these gimlet-eyed fellows hunt up the markings. This edition was gotten up by Sunderland for a high-low-jack pack, and was read the first night. The profession never use it, the marks are so apparent. Try it once at all-fours."

The cards were dealt by the captain, and Malcolm said, "I will stand, although I have but one trump, for you have none." And Malcolm made three points.

"Had you detected the manipulation, I should have lost and you would have made three.

"Try another pack. This had a run of three months before it was detected. It is well executed, and only the most sagacious and quick-sighted are never mistaken in the cards. There is not an edition of cards that I cannot read as well by seeing one side as the other. No pack was ever edited in fairness to both parties. A man is a fool who will get out such an edition. I carried two new ones to the B---- house in London, and won thirteen nights with them."

One of the company who had been out and returned, produced a pack with plain backs, and asked triumphantly if Mr. Malcolm would please to

read them by the backs.

"This edition," said Malcolm, "was gotten up in Edinburgh by an Irishman named Mulligan, and was popular for a while, but when he won every night with it suspicions were aroused, and finally a boy twelve years old deciphered it. I can tell each card across the room." And he did.

And so the entertainment went on, Malcolm winning every game till supper was served; not one of the company detecting how it was done.

"Now, boys," said Malcolm "this is my treat, and please enjoy yourselves, for I shall expect you all to be in court when my case is tried, to laugh on my side. Lawyers don't understand the value of a chuckle in swaying a jury in a doubtful case. Lay to. 'The art of cookery,' says Henry Cornelius Agrippa, 'is very useful if not dishonest.' My appetite is good, and I trust you are all likewise minded, for Beaumont and Fletcher say, 'What an excellent thing God did bestow upon man when he gave him a good appetite. Mine is almost equal to that of Erisichthon described by Ovid,--

> 'Thus Erisichthon's profane chops devour
> All sorts of food: in him food is the cause
> Of hunger: and he will employ his jaws
> To whet his appetite.'

"'Tis said that Maximus, the Emperor who succeeded Alexander Memneaus, consumed forty pounds of flesh in one day, and drank an amphora of wine containing forty-eight quarts.

"Waiter, pass your wines. No blue ruin or heavy wet. In the days of the great Cæsar all feasts began with eggs and ended with fruits, cream and apples; hence the proverb, _ab avo usque ad mala_, and the man who did not crush his eggshell or put his folded napkin on his left knee, was considered a fool. As we have not eggs we will do our best with the napkins. No melancholy subjects at this table. So here's luck." And all drank a bumper.

"Did you ever hear how Pope Julius III. became enraged against his cook for not having saved him a cold peacock for supper, and how he began to blaspheme? Whereupon one of his cardinals said to him, 'Let not your Holiness be so moved with a matter of so little weight.' 'What!' said the pope, 'if God was so angry for one apple that he cast our first parents out of Paradise, why may not I, his vicar, be angry for a peacock, sithers a peacock is greater than an apple?'

"The oysters from Tarentum, so prized by one of the Cæsars, I forget which, were not to be compared to these. Captain, take a hand at them. Let me give you a song."

And with a sweet melodious voice and a Scotch accent, he sang Burns's Ode on the Haggis.

"'Fair, fa' your honest, sonsie face,
Great chieftain o' the pudding race:
Aboon them a' ye tak your place,
Paunch, tripe, or thairm;
Weel are ye worthy o' a grace
As lang's my arm.'

"This bird is excellent; whoever cooked it,

'His name should be enrolled
In Estcourt's book, whose gridiron's framed of gold.'

"Help yourselves, gentlemen, digestion is the business of the stomach, and indigestion that of the physicians. It is better to dine late, for one can then concentrate all his thoughts upon his plate, forget business, and only think of eating and drinking and going to bed. Ha, ha! I should have omitted the bed in quoting from the gourmands, for they would rather fast than be obliged to eat a good dinner in a hurry. Five hours is little enough, provided Mr. Burchard shall not in the mean time appear and drive us away.

"This venison is delicious; none was ever better served. The Roman Senators debated the question how a turbot should be cooked, and the author of this dish deserves a place among such.

"Montmaur is reported to have said that Easter and Christmas were the two best days in the year. Easter because it was farthest from Lent, and Christmas because then you breakfasted at midnight. Who says this is not equal to Montmaur's Christmas breakfast?"

This sort of banter, interspersed with songs and stories, was kept up till a late hour, when all of a sudden the keepers awoke to the fact that Malcolm had flown. The visitors laughed heartily. The company dispersed, not standing upon the order of their going. The table was cleared, and the office put in order. Only one of the keepers remained, who resembled in appearance a cat that had played with her mouse and lost it; the others were out looking for Malcolm. At an early hour in the morning he returned, and seating himself at Mr. Burchard's desk, wrote him this note:

MR. BURCHARD,--

I trust I did not disturb your repose. I found, this morning, in your safe in your house this pretty little casket sent you from your English namesake. I have seen it often before,

but wanted another squint at it, and I have brought it to your office lest some burglar might steal it from your house. I noticed your wife's watch lying around loose in your sleeping-room, which is of no great value--to me,--and I contented myself with the charms, which I will put into your steel chest, here in the office, for safe keeping against the time of my need. The putting a yoke on the keys of your door, so I could not turn them with the nippers, was all useless. The chair poised against your sleeping-room door gave me a deal of trouble, and I could not put it back as I found it. Please excuse me. The thread on the stairs attached to an alarm-bell might as well have been omitted. The old-fashioned fork against the bolt I put back as I found it, and came out by the dining-room window. Your portfolio you will find between the beds on which you were sleeping. It took me half an hour to make you turn over so I could do it. George Waters is my counsel, to whom I have committed my case. He will arrange the evidence. Unless you eat your own words, you will sit beside him and ask the jury if they believe the case is made out beyond a reasonable doubt, for I know better than you the weight of your character. I shall be in jail by breakfast-time.

MALCOLM.

At the bottom of the note was a well-drawn hand with spread fingers at the end of a man's nose.

When all the officers had returned, dropping in one by one, towards morning, they were somewhat surprised and relieved upon beholding Malcolm. He informed them that it would be all right if they would all appear at his trial and laugh for him.

At the trial, Mr. Burchard, care-worn and nervous, made his appearance. Mr. Waters conducted the testimony for the defence. Mr. Burchard inquired of him what testimony Malcolm relied upon, and was answered that no testimony whatever was to be introduced, but he would rely altogether upon the lack of testimony on the part of the government. A cold shiver ran down Burchard's backbone. The question of guilty or not guilty turned upon the identity of the mat previously spoken of, which, it was asserted, Malcolm threw away as he ran. The watchman testified positively to the fact, but it was in the night, and he might have been mistaken. Mr. W. H. B. testified generally as to the robbery, and recognized the mat as probably the one made by his daughter, although he could not positively make oath to the fact. As the case turned upon the testimony of Miss B., I give the whole of the cross-examination.

Question by Mr. Waters. You have said that you _know_ this mat to

have been the work of your own hands, and that you made it for a particular purpose. If you please, what was that purpose?

Answer. I had presented me on Christmas a fine statuette of Samuel, which I admired so much that I worked this mat with great care upon which to place it.

Q. And did you work it from a pattern?

A. Yes, sir.

Q. And have you ever seen others like it?

A. Yes, sir, three, but not in this city.

Q. And where did you get the pattern?

A. From a friend in Philadelphia.

Q. Now, if you have seen other mats like this, how do you know, of your own knowledge, that this is not some other lady's work?

A. I know it is my work because the centre portion of the mat was left plain, which centre is exactly the size of the base of my statuette.

Q. Is there any other reason which you can give?

A. I know it looks like my mat.

Q. Certainly, but would it not look like your mat if it had been wrought by another lady?

A. Perhaps so.

Q. You say _perhaps_ so; would it not certainly so look?

A. I think it would.

Q. Have you the statuette now?

A. Yes, sir, it is at our house.

At this point of the trial the statuette was sent for and brought into court by the father of the witness. Mr. Waters took it into his possession. Considerable discussion arose when the prosecuting attorney insisted upon being allowed to examine it. Mr. Waters became

almost violent, and declared he would smash the image rather than be so imposed upon. He was cross-examining the witness with no testimony for the accused, and he insisted upon his rights without interruption. The court ruled in Mr. Waters's favor. He, holding the statuette by the base, walked up to Miss B., and inquired of her if she recognized it as her own.

A. I certainly do.

Q. And how do you know it is certainly your own?

A. It is just like mine.

Q. But are there not other copies so like it as that you cannot tell the difference, nor one from the others?

A. Yes.

Q. How then can you say for a certainty that this is yours?

A. Because my father has just brought it from our house, and I saw him go for it and return with it. I can give no better reason.

Q. Can you say of your own knowledge, from an examination of the image, that it is yours?

A. No, sir.

Q. Have you any more reliable knowledge concerning the mat being yours?

A. Yes, for the space in the middle was made expressly to fit the base of the statuette.

Q. And are you willing to risk your testimony upon that fact alone?

A. I am.

The mat and the statuette were then shown the witness and the jury, and the base of the statuette overlapped the plain surface in the centre of the mat half an inch. The witness became faint, and was carried into the lobby. The jury, without leaving their seats, rendered a verdict of NOT GUILTY.

The captain feasted Malcolm that night, and obtained from him the secret of his defence. Maguire, as a woman, had procured the situation of cook in the house of Mr. W. H. B., and had substituted for the

original Samuel another, altogether similar, except that its base was half an inch larger.

The captain further inquired what had been Malcolm's occupation in early life, and how he had acquired so much knowledge of the gourmands and feasts.

"I was cook at Baden Baden," said Malcolm, "at the B---- House. There I met Count S., who took a fancy to me. I served also at the tables, after that as waiter in the house, and keeping an eye open I was a great help to the Count. He knew everything about the table, kitchen, and the larder, and I remembered what he used to repeat night after night, when a year or two ago I found Dick Humelbergius's book upon the art of never breakfasting at home and always dining abroad. I found everything recorded there, and that is pretty much the only book I ever read. I can quote Latin, and know where to put it in, but what the ---- the meaning of it is, I have no notion."

"Allow me further to inquire by what process or contrivance you can slide a bolt on the opposite side of the door?"

"I paid $3500 for that information, and don't propose to part with it."

"Then advise me what is best for me to do when I find a burglar in my sleeping-room in the night time?"

"Do nothing, sir, unless you are hunting up a graveyard. We never desire to maim or kill, but we can. I should be poorly provided or skilled if I was not ready for such emergencies. As soon as the burglar leaves your room, rise and light the gas, and he will trouble you no more."

"One other question. Did you rob and then burn the Jenks house?"

"That is not a question to be answered, but I will say that I have a drawing of the house and the location of every piece of furniture in it, which is perfect."

To this day, only two of the persons who were present at the dinner-party are aware of the history of the two worthies, the Reverend Mr. Malcolm of Oxford and Maguire the butler of Mr. Bernon Burchard.

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Author: Various
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The Sliprails and the Spur

The colours of the setting sun
 Withdrew across the Western land --
He raised the sliprails, one by one,
 And shot them home with trembling hand;
Her brown hands clung -- her face grew pale --
 Ah! quivering chin and eyes that brim! --
One quick, fierce kiss across the rail,
 And, "Good-bye, Mary!" "Good-bye, Jim!"
 ~Oh, he rides hard to race the pain
 Who rides from love, who rides from home;
 But he rides slowly home again,
 Whose heart has learnt to love and roam.~

A hand upon the horse's mane,
 And one foot in the stirrup set,
And, stooping back to kiss again,
 With "Good-bye, Mary! don't you fret!
When I come back" -- he laughed for her --
 "We do not know how soon 'twill be;
I'll whistle as I round the spur --
 You let the sliprails down for me."

She gasped for sudden loss of hope,
 As, with a backward wave to her,
He cantered down the grassy slope
 And swiftly round the dark'ning spur.
Black-pencilled panels standing high,
 And darkness fading into stars,
And blurring fast against the sky,
 A faint white form beside the bars.

And often at the set of sun,
 In winter bleak and summer brown,
She'd steal across the little run,
 And shyly let the sliprails down.
And listen there when darkness shut
 The nearer spur in silence deep;
And when they called her from the hut
 Steal home and cry herself to sleep.
 .
~And he rides hard to dull the pain
 Who rides from one that loves him best;
And he rides slowly back again,
 Whose restless heart must rove for rest.~

by Henry Lawson

from: An Anthology of Australian Verse
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WELSH HONEYMOON[38]

By JEANNETTE MARKS

> [Footnote 38: Copyright, 1912, 1916, 1917, by Jeannette Marks. The professional and amateur stage rights of this play are strictly reserved by the author. Application for permission to produce the play should be made to the author, who may be addressed in care of the publishers, Little, Brown and Company, Boston. All rights reserved.]

Jeannette Marks, playwright, poet, essayist, and writer of short stories, was born in 1875 at Chattanooga, Tennessee. She grew up in Philadelphia, however, where her father was a member of the faculty of the University of Pennsylvania. Her education in this country was supplemented by a sojourn at a school in Dresden. She took her first degree at Wellesley College in 1900, and her master's degree there in 1903. Her graduate studies were pursued at the Bodleian Library and at the British Museum. Since 1901 she has taught English literature at Mount Holyoke.

The play here reprinted, _Welsh Honeymoon_, was one of the two--the other was her _The Merry, Merry Cuckoo_--that won the Welsh National Theatre First Prize for the best Welsh plays in November, 1911, the year after Josephine Preston Peabody had carried off the palm at Stratford-on-Avon.

She writes in her preface to _Three Welsh Plays_, the collection from which _Welsh Honeymoon_ is drawn:

"'Poetry' and 'song' are words which convey, better than any other two words could, the priceless gifts of the Welsh people to the world. With their love for music, for beauty, for the significance of their land and its folklore, their inherent romance in the difficult art of living, they have transformed ugliness into beauty, turned loneliness into speech, and ever recalled life to its only permanent possessions in wonder and romance.

"Curiously enough, the Welsh, rich in poetry and music, have been almost altogether devoid of plays. But no one who has read those first Welsh tales in the 'Mabinogion' (c. 1260) could for an instant think the Cymru devoid of the dramatic instinct. The Welsh way of interpreting experience is essentially dramatic. _The Dream of Maxen Wledig_, _The Dream of Rhonabwy_, both from the 'Mabinogion,' are sharply dramatic, although then and later Welsh literature remained

practically devoid of the play form. Experience dramatized is, too, that Pilgrim's Progress of Gwalia: 'Y Bardd Cwsg' (1703).

"Every gift of the Welsh would seem to promise the realization some day of a great national drama, for they have not only the gift of poetry and the power to seize the symbol--short cut through experience--which can, even as the crutch of Ibsen's Little Eyolf, lift a play into greatness; they have, also, natures profoundly emotional and yet intellectually critical. They are, humanly speaking, perfect tools for the achievement of great drama. But it is a drab journey from those 'Mabinogion' days of wonder, coarse and crude as they were in many ways, yet intensely vital, through the 'Bardd Cwsg' to Twm o'r Nant (1739-1810) the so-called 'Welsh Shakespeare,' whose Interludes might, with sufficient worrying, afford delectation to the rock-ribbed Puritanism which has stood, as much as any other oppression, in the way of Gwalia's full development of her genius for beauty.

"It was, then, a significant moment when 'The Welsh National Theatre' came into existence with so powerful a patron as Lord Howard de Walden, lessee of the Haymarket, and Owen Rhoscomyl (Captain Owen Vaughan) and other gifted Welsh literati for its sponsors. And it did not seem an insignificant moment to one person, the playwright of _The Merry Merry Cuckoo_ and _Welsh Honeymoon_, when she learned through her friendly agent, Curtis Brown of London, that she had received one of the Welsh National Theatre's first prizes (1911)."

Jeannette Marks's interest in Wales is the result of a number of holidays spent in wandering through its highways and byways. Books of hers like _Through Welsh Doorways_ and _Gallant Little Wales_ bespeak an affectionate intimacy with homes and inhabitants. In the last named, especially, the chapters called "Cambrian Cottages" and "Welsh Wales" contain material that is highly illuminating in connection with the interpretation of her plays. Edward Knobloch, the playwright, is said to have pointed out to the author the dramatic situations inherent in her short stories and sketches, a suggestion which bore fruit in _Three Welsh Plays_.

The first performance of _Welsh Honeymoon_ was given by the American Drama Society in Boston in February, 1916. It has also been produced by the Boston Women's City Club, the Vagabond Players in Baltimore, the Hull House Players in Chicago, and the Prince Street Players in Rochester.

WELSH HONEYMOON[39]

CHARACTERS

VAVASOUR JONES.
CATHERINE JONES, _his wife_.
EILIR MORRIS, _nephew of Vavasour Jones_.
MRS. MORGAN, _the baker_.
HOWELL HOWELL, _the milliner_.

[Footnote 39: PRONUNCIATION OF WELSH NAMES

1 _ch_ has, roughly, the same sound as in German or in the Scotch _loch_.
2 _dd_ = English _th_, roughly, in brea_th_e.
3 _e_ has, roughly, the sound of _ai_ in d_ai_ry.
4 _f_ = English _v_.
5 _ff_ = English sharp _f_.
6 _ll_ represents a sound intermediate between _the_ and _fl_.
7 _w_ as a consonant is pronounced as in English; as a vowel = _oo_.
8 _y_ is sometimes like _u_ in b_u_t, but sometimes like _ee_ in gr_ee_n.

NOTE: _The author will gladly answer questions about pronunciation, costuming, etc., etc._]

PLACE.--_Beddgelert, a little village in North Wales._

A Welsh kitchen. At back, in center, a deep ingle, with two hobs and fire bars fixed between, on either side settles. On the left-hand side near the fire a church; on the right, in a pile, some peat ready for use. Above the fireplace is a mantel on which are set some brass candlesticks, a deep copper cheese bowl, and two pewter plates. Near the left settle is a three-legged table set with teapot, cups and saucers for two, a plate of bread and butter, a plate of jam, and a creamer. At the right and to the right of the door, is a tall, highly polished, oaken grandfather's clock, with a shining brass face; to the left of the door is a tridarn. The tridarn dresser is lined with bright blue paper and filled with luster china. The floor is of beaten clay, whitewashed around the edges; from the rafters of the peaked ceiling hang flitches of bacon, hams, and bunches of onions and herbs. On the hearth is a copper kettle singing gaily; and on either side of the fireplace are latticed windows opening into the kitchen. Through the door to the right, when open, may be seen the flagstones and cottages of a Welsh village street; through latticed windows the twinkling of many village lights.

It is about half after eleven on Allhallows' Eve in the village of Beddgelert.

At rise of curtain, the windows of kitchen are closed; the fire is burning brightly, and two candles are lighted on the mantelpiece. VAVASOUR JONES, about thirty-five years old, dressed in a striped vest, a short, heavy blue coat, cut away in front, and with swallowtails behind, and trimmed with brass buttons, and somewhat tight trousers down to his boot tops, is standing by the open door at the right, looking out anxiously on to the glittering, rain-wet flagstone street and calling after someone.

VAVASOUR[40] [_calling_]. Kats, Kats, mind ye come home soon from Pally Hughes's!

> [Footnote 40: The _a_'s are broad throughout, i. e., Kats is pronounced Kaats; Vavasour is Vavasoor: _ou_ is oo.]

CATHERINE [_from a distance_]. Aye, I'm no wantin' to go, but I must. Good-by!

VAVASOUR. Good-by! Kats, ye mind about comin' home? [_There is no reply, and VAVASOUR looks still further into the rain-wet street. He calls loudly and desperately._] Kats, Kats darlin', I cannot let you go without tellin' ye that--Kats, do ye hear? [_There is still no reply and after one more searching of the street, VAVASOUR closes the door and sits down on the end of the nearest settle._]

VAVASOUR. Dear, dear, she's gone, an' I may never see her again, an' I'm to blame, an' she didn't know whatever that in the night--[_Loud knocking on the closed door; VAVASOUR jumps and stands irresolute._] The devil, it can't be comin' for her already? [_The knocking grows louder._]

VOICE [_calling_]. Catherine, Vavasour, are ye in?

VAVASOUR [_opening the door_]. Aye, come in, whoever ye are. [_MRS. MORGAN, the Baker, dressed in a scarlet whittle and freshly starched white cap beneath her tall Welsh beaver hat, enters, shaking the rain from her cloak._]

MRS. MORGAN. Where's Catherine?

VAVASOUR. She's gone, Mrs. Morgan.

MRS. MORGAN. Gone? Are ye no goin'? Not goin' to Pally Hughes's on Allhallows' Eve?

VAVASOUR [_shaking his head and looking very white_]. Nay, I'm no feelin' well.

MRS. MORGAN. Aye, I see ye're ill?

VAVASOUR. Well, I'm not ill, but I'm not well. Not well at all, Mrs. Morgan.

MRS. MORGAN. We'll miss ye, but I must hurryin' on whatever; I'm late now. Good-night!

VAVASOUR [_speaking drearily_]. Good-night! [_He closes the door and returns to the settle, where he sits down by the pile of peat and drops his head in his hand. Then he starts up nervously for no apparent cause and opens one of the lattice windows. With an exclamation of fear, he slams it to and throws his weight against the door. Calling and holding hard to the door._] Ye've no cause to come here! Ye old death's head, get away! [_Outside there is loud pounding on the door and a voice shouting for admittance. VAVASOUR is obliged to fall back as the door is gradually forced open, and a head is thrust in, a white handkerchief tied over it._]

HOWELL HOWELL [_seeing the terror-stricken face of VAVASOUR_]. Well, man, what ails ye; did ye think I was a ghost? [_HOWELL HOWELL, the Milliner, in highlows and a plum-colored coat, a handkerchief on his hat, enters, stamping off the rain and closing the door. He carefully wipes off his plum-colored sleeves and speaks indignantly._] Well, man, are ye crazy, keepin' me out in the rain that way? Where's Catherine?

VAVASOUR [_stammering_]. She's at P-p-p-ally Hughes's.

HOWELL HOWELL. Are ye no goin'?

VAVASOUR. Nay, Howell Howell, I'm no goin'.

HOWELL HOWELL. An' dressed in your best? What's the matter? Have ye been drinkin' whatever?

VAVASOUR [_wrathfully_]. Drinkin'! I'd better be drinkin' when neighbors go walkin' round the village on Allhallows' Eve with their heads done up in white.

HOWELL HOWELL. Aye, well, I can't be spoilin' the new hat I have, that I cannot. A finer beaver there has never been in my shop. [_He takes off the handkerchief, hangs it where the heat of the fire will dry it a bit, and then, removing the beaver, shows it to VAVASOUR, turning it this way and that._]

VAVASOUR [_absent-mindedly_]. Aye, grand, grand, man!

HOWELL HOWELL. What are ye gazin' at the clock for?

VAVASOUR [_guiltily_]. I'm no lookin' at anything.

HOWELL HOWELL. Well, indeed, I must be goin', or I shall be late at Pally Hughes's. Good-night.

VAVASOUR. Good-night. [_He closes the door and stands before the clock, studying it. While he is studying its face the door opens slowly, and the tumbled, curly head of a lad about eighteen years of age peers in. The door continues slowly to open. VAVASOUR unconscious all the while._] 'Tis ten now. Ten, eleven, twelve; that's three hours left, 'tis; nay, nay, 'tis only two hours left, after all, an' then--

EILIR MORRIS [_bounding in and shutting the door behind him with a bang_]. Boo! Whoo--o--o!

VAVASOUR [_his face blanched, dropping limply on to the settle_]. The devil!

EILIR MORRIS [_troubled_]. Uch, the pity, Uncle! I didn't think, an' ye're ill!

VAVASOUR. Tut, tut, 'tis no matter, an' I'm not ill--not ill at all, but Eilir, lad, ye're kin, an'--could ye promise never to tell?

EILIR MORRIS [_who thinks his uncle has been drinking, speaks to him as if he would humor his whim_]. Aye, Uncle, I'm kin, an' I promise. Tell on. What is it? Are ye sick?

VAVASOUR [_drearily_]. Uch, lad, I'm not sick!

EILIR MORRIS. Well, what ails ye?

VAVASOUR. 'Tis Allhallows' Eve an'--

EILIR MORRIS. Aren't ye goin' to Pally Hughes's?

VAVASOUR [_moaning and rising_]. Ow, the devil, goin' to Pally Hughes's while 'tis drawin' nearer an' nearer an'--Ow! 'Tis the night when Catherine must go.

EILIR MORRIS. When Aunt Kats must go! What do you mean?

VAVASOUR. She'll be dead to-night at twelve.

EILIR MORRIS [_bewildered_]. Dead at twelve? But she's at Pally Hughes's. Does she know it?

VAVASOUR. No, but I do, an' to think I've been unkind to her! I've tried this year to make up for it, but 'tis no use, lad; one year'll never make up for ten of harsh words, whatever. Ow! [_Groaning, VAVASOUR collapses on to the settle and rocks to and fro, moaning aloud._]

EILIR MORRIS [_mystified_]. Well, ye've not been good to her, Uncle, that's certain; but ye've been different the past year.

VAVASOUR [_sobbing_]. Aye, but a year'll not do any good, an' she'll be dyin' at twelve to-night. Ow! I've turned to the scriptures to see what it says about a man an' his wife, but it'll no do, no do, no do!

EILIR MORRIS. Have ye been drinkin', Uncle?

VAVASOUR [_hotly_]. Drinkin'!

EILIR MORRIS. Well, indeed, no harm, but, Uncle, I cannot understand why Aunt Kats's goin' an' where.

VAVASOUR [_rising suddenly from the settle and seizing EILIR by the coat lapel_]. She's goin' to leave me, lad; 'tis Allhallows' Eve whatever! An' she'll be dyin' at twelve. Aye, a year ago things were so bad between us, on Allhallows' Eve I went down to the church porch shortly before midnight to see whether the spirit of your Aunt Kats would be called an'--

EILIR MORRIS. Uncle, 'twas fair killin' her!

VAVASOUR. I wanted to see whether she would live the twelve months out. An' as I was leanin' against the church wall, hopin', aye, lad, prayin' to see her spirit there, an' know she'd die, I saw somethin' comin' 'round the corner with white over its head.

EILIR MORRIS [_wailing_]. Ow--w!

VAVASOUR. It drew nearer an' nearer, an' when it came in full view of the church porch, it paused, it whirled around like that, an' sped away with the shroud flappin' about its feet, an' the rain beatin' down on its white hood.

EILIR MORRIS [_wailing again_]. Ow--w!

VAVASOUR. But there was time to see that it was the spirit of Catherine, an' I was glad because my wicked prayer had been answered, an' because with Catherine dyin' the next Allhallows', we'd have to

live together only the year out.

EILIR MORRIS [_raising his hand_]. Hush, what's that?

VAVASOUR. 'Tis voices whatever. [_Both listen, EILIR goes to the window, VAVASOUR to the door. The voices become louder._]

EILIR MORRIS. They're singin' a song at Pally Hughes's. [_Voices are audibly singing:_]

Ni awn adre bawb dan ganu,
 Ar hyd y nos;
Saif ein hiaith safo Cymru,
 Ar hyd y nos;
Bydded undeb a brawdgarwch
Ini'n gwlwm diogelwch,
Felly canwn er hyfrydwch,
 Ar hyd y nos.

Sweetly sang beside a fountain,
 All through the night,
Mona's maiden on that mountain,
 All through the night.
When wilt thou, from war returning,
In whose breast true love is burning,
Come and change to joy my mourning,
 By day and night?

VAVASOUR. Aye, they're happy, an' Kats does not know. I went home that night, lad, thinkin' 'twas the last year we'd have to live together, an', considerin' as 'twas the last year, I might just as well try to be decent an' kind. An' when I reached home, Catherine was up waitin' for me an' spoke so pleasantly, an' we sat down an' had a long talk--just like the days when we were courtin'.

EILIR MORRIS. Did she know, Uncle?

VAVASOUR [_puzzled_]. Nay, how could she know. But she seems queer,--as if she felt the evil comin'. Well, indeed, each day was sweeter than the one before, an' we were man an' wife in love an' kindness at last, but all the while I was thinkin' of that figure by the churchyard. Lad, lad, ye'll be marryin' before long,--be good to her, lad, be good to her! [_VAVASOUR lets go the lapels of EILIR's coat and sinks back on to the settle, half sobbing. Outside the roar of wind and rain growing louder can be heard._]

VAVASOUR [_looking at the clock_]. An' here 'tis Allhallows' Eve again, an' the best year of my life is past, an' she must die in an hour an' a half. Ow, ow! It has all come from my own evil heart an'

evil wish. Think, lad, prayin' for her callin'; aye, goin' there, hopin' ye'd see her spirit, an' countin' on her death!

EILIR MORRIS [_mournfully_]. Aye, Uncle, 'tis bad, an' I've no word to say to ye for comfort. I recollect well the story Granny used to tell about Christmas Pryce; 'twas somethin' the same whatever. An' there was Betty Williams was called a year ago, an' is dead now; an' there was Silvan Griffith, an' Geffery, his friend, an' Silvan had just time to dig Geffery's grave an' then his own, too, by its side, an' they was buried the same day an' hour.

VAVASOUR [_wailing_]. Ow--w--w! [_At that moment the door is blown violently open by the wind; both men jump and stare out into the dark where only the dimmed lights of the rain-swept street are to be seen, and the very bright windows of Pally Hughes's cottage._]

EILIR MORRIS. Uch, she'll be taken there!

VAVASOUR. Aye, an', Eilir, she was loath to go to Pally's, but I could not tell her the truth.

EILIR MORRIS. Are ye not goin', Uncle?

VAVASOUR. Nay, lad, I cannot go. I'm fair crazy. I'll just be stayin' home, waitin' for them to bring her back. Ow--w--w!

EILIR MORRIS. Tut, tut, Uncle, I'm sorry. I'll just see for ye what they're doin'. [_EILIR steps out and is gone for an instant. He comes back excitedly._]

VAVASOUR [_shouting after him_]. Can ye see her, lad?

EILIR MORRIS [_returning_]. Dear, they've a grand display, raisins an' buns, an' spices an' biscuits--

VAVASOUR. But your Aunt Kats?

EILIR MORRIS. Aye, an' a grand fire, an' a tub with apples in it an'--

VAVASOUR. But Catherine?

EILIR MORRIS. Aye, she was there near the fire, an' just as I turned, they blew the lights out.

VAVASOUR. Blew the lights out! Uch, she'll be taken there whatever!

EILIR MORRIS. They're tellin' stories in the dark.

VAVASOUR. Go back again an' tell what ye can see of your Aunt Kats,

lad.

EILIR MORRIS. Aye.

VAVASOUR [_shouting after him_]. Find where she's sittin', lad--make certain of that.

EILIR MORRIS [_running in breathless_]. They're throwin' nuts on the fire--

VAVASOUR. Is she there?

EILIR MORRIS. I'm thinkin' she is, but old Pally Hughes was just throwin' a nut on the fire an'--

VAVASOUR [_impatiently_]. 'Tis no matter about Pally Hughes whatever, but your Aunt Kats, did--

EILIR MORRIS. There was only the light of the fire; I did not see her, but I'll go again.

VAVASOUR. Watch for her nut an' see does it burn brightly.

EILIR MORRIS [_going out_]. Aye.

VAVASOUR [_calling after_]. Mind, I'm wantin' to know what she's doin'. [_He has scarcely spoken the last word when a great commotion is heard: a door across the street being slammed to violently, and the sound of running feet. VAVASOUR straightens up, his eyes in terror on the door, which CATHERINE JONES throws open and bursts through._]

VAVASOUR [_holding out his arms_]. Catherine, is it really ye! [_CATHERINE, after a searching glance at him, draws herself up. VAVASOUR draws himself up, too, and then stoops to pick up some peat which he puts on the fire, and crosses over to left and sits down on the settle near the chimney, without having embraced her. CATHERINE's face is flushed, her eyes wild under the pretty white cap she wears, a black Welsh beaver above it. She is dressed in a scarlet cloak, under this a tight bodice and short, full skirt, bright stockings, and clogs with brass tips. Her apron is of heavy linen, striped; over her breast a kerchief is crossed, and from the elbows down to the wrist are full white sleeves stiffly starched._]

CATHERINE. Yiss, yiss, 'twas dull at Pally's--very dull. My nut didn't burn very brightly, an'--an'--well, indeed, my feet was wet, an' I feared takin' a cold.

VAVASOUR. Yiss, yiss, 'tis better for ye here, dearie. [_Then there is silence between them. CATHERINE still breathes heavily from the

running, and VAVASOUR shuffles his feet. While they are both sitting there, unable to say a word, the door opens without a sound, and EILIR's curly head is thrust in. A guttural exclamation from him makes them start and look towards the door, but he closes it before they can see him. CATHERINE then takes off her beaver and looks at VAVASOUR. VAVASOUR opens his mouth, shuts it, and opens it again._]

VAVASOUR [_desperately_]. Did ye have a fine time at Pally's?

CATHERINE. Aye, 'twas gay an' fine an'--an'--yiss, yiss, so 'twas an' so 'twasn't.

VAVASOUR [_his eyes seeking the clock_]. A quarter past eleven, uch! Katy, do ye recall Pastor Evan's sermon, the one he preached last New Year?

CATHERINE [_also glancing at the clock_]. Sixteen minutes after eleven--yiss--yiss--

VAVASOUR [_catching CATHERINE's glance at the clock_]. Well, Catherine, do--

CATHERINE. Yiss, yiss, I said I did whatever. 'Twas about inheritin' the grace of life together.

VAVASOUR. Kats, dear, wasn't he sayin' that love is eternal, an' that--a man--an'--an'--his wife was lovin' for--for--

CATHERINE [_glancing at the clock and meeting VAVASOUR's eyes just glancing away from the clock_]. Aye, lad, for ever-lastin' life! Uch, what have I done?

VAVASOUR [_unheeding and doubling up as if from pain_]. Half after eleven! Yiss, yiss, dear, didn't he say that the Lord was mindful of us--of our difficulties, an' our temptations an' our mistakes?

CATHERINE [_tragically_]. Aye, an' our mistakes. Ow, ow, ow, but a half hour's left!

VAVASOUR. Do ye think, dearie, that if a man were to--to--uch!--be unkind to his wife--an' was sorry an' his wife--his wife dies, that he'd be--be--

CATHERINE [_tenderly_]. Aye, I'm thinkin' so. An', lad dear, do ye think if anythin' was to happen to ye to-night,--yiss, _this_ night,--that ye'd take any grudge against me away with ye?

VAVASOUR [_stiffening_]. Happen to _me_, Catherine? [_VAVASOUR collapses, groaning. CATHERINE goes to his side on the settle._]

CATHERINE [_in an agonized voice_]. Uch, dearie, what is it, what is it, what ails ye?

VAVASOUR [_slanting an eye at the clock_]. Nothin', nothin' at all. Ow, the devil, 'tis twenty minutes before twelve whatever!

CATHERINE. Lad, lad, what is it?

VAVASOUR. 'Tis nothin', nothin' at all--'tis--ow!--'tis just a little pain across me.

CATHERINE [_her face whitening as she steals a look at the clock and puts her arm around VAVASOUR_]. Vavasour, lad dear, is that the wind in the chimney? Put your arm about me an' hold fast.

VAVASOUR [_both hands across his stomach, his eyes on the clock_]. Ow--ten minutes!

CATHERINE [_shaking all over_]. Is that a step at the door?

VAVASOUR [_unheeding_].'Tis goin' to strike now in a minute.

CATHERINE [_her eyes in horror on the clock_]. Five minutes before twelve!

VAVASOUR [_almost crying, his eyes fixed on the clock's face_]. Uch, the toad, the serpent!

CATHERINE [_her face in her hands_]. Dear God, he's goin' now!

VAVASOUR [_covering his eyes_]. Uch, the devil! Uch, the gates of hell! [_CATHERINE cries out. VAVASOUR groans loudly. The clock is striking: One, Two, Three, Four, Five, Six, Seven, Eight, Nine, Ten, Eleven, Twelve! The last loud clang vibrates and subsides. Through a chink in her fingers CATHERINE is peering at VAVASOUR. Through a similar chink his agonized eyes are peering at her._]

CATHERINE [_gulping_]. Uch!

VAVASOUR. The devil!

CATHERINE [_putting out her hand to touch him_]. Lad, dear! [_They embrace, they kiss, they dance madly about. Then they do it all over again. While they are doing this, EILIR opens the door again and thrusts in his head. He stares open-eyed, open-mouthed at them, and leans around the side of the door to see what time it is, saying audibly "five minutes past twelve," grunts his satisfaction, and closes the door._]

VAVASOUR [_mad with joy_]. Kats, are ye here, really here?

CATHERINE [_surprised_]. Am _I_ here? Tut, lad, are _ye_ here?

VAVASOUR [_shrewdly_]. Yiss, that is are we _both_ here?

CATHERINE [_perplexed_]. Did ye think I wasn't goin' to be?

VAVASOUR [_suppressed intelligent joy in his eyes_]. No--o, not that, only I thought, I thought ye was goin' to--to--faint, Kats. I thought ye looked like it, Kats.

CATHERINE [_the happiness on her face vanishing, sinks on to the nearest settle_]. Uch, I'm a bad, bad woman, aye, Vavasour Jones, a _bad_ woman!

VAVASOUR [_puzzled, yet lightly_]. Nay, Kats, nay!

CATHERINE [_desperately and almost in tears_]. Ye cannot believe what I must tell ye. Lad, a year ago this night I went to the church porch, hopin', aye, prayin', ye'd be called, that I'd see your spirit walkin'.

VAVASOUR [_starting and recovering himself_]. Catherine, ye did that!

CATHERINE [_plunging on with her confession_]. Aye, lad, I did, I'd been so unhappy with the quarrelin' an' hard words. I could think of nothin' but gettin' rid of them.

VAVASOUR [_in a tone of condemnation and standing over her_]. That was bad, very bad indeed!

CATHERINE. An' then, lad, when I reached the church corner an' saw your spirit was really there, _really_ called, an' I knew ye'd not live the year out, I was frightened, but uch! lad, I was glad, I was indeed.

VAVASOUR [_looking grave_]. Catherine, 'twas a terrible thing to do!

CATHERINE [_meekly_]. Yiss, I know it now, but I didn't then. I was hard-hearted, an' I was weak with longin' to escape from it all. An' when I ran home I was frightened, but uch! lad, I was glad, too, an' now it hurts me so to think of it. Can you no comfort me?

VAVASOUR [_grudgingly, but not touching CATHERINE's outstretched hand_]. Aye, well, I could, but, Kats, 'twas such a terrible thing to do!

CATHERINE. Yiss, yiss, ye'll never be able to forgive me, I'm thinkin'. An' then when ye came in from the lodge, ye spoke so pleasantly to me that I was troubled. An' now the year through it has grown better an' better, an' I could think of nothin' but lovin' ye, an' wishing' ye to live, an' knowin' I was the cause of your bein' called. Uch, lad, _can_ ye forgive me?

VAVASOUR [_slowly_]. Aye, I can, none of us is without sin; but, Catherine, it was wrong, aye, aye, 'twas a wicked thing for a woman to do.

CATHERINE [_still more meekly_]. An' then to-night, lad, I was expectin' ye to go, knowin' ye couldn't live after twelve, an' ye sittin' there so innocent an' mournful. An' when the time came, I wanted to die myself. Uch!

VAVASOUR [_sitting down beside her and putting an arm about her as he speaks in a superior tone of voice_]. No matter, dearie, now. It _was_ wrong in ye, but we're still here, an' it's been a sweet year, yiss, better nor a honeymoon, an' all the years after we'll make better nor this. There, there, Kats, let's have a bit of a wassail to celebrate our Allhallows' honeymoon, shall we?

CATHERINE [_starting to fetch a bowl_]. Yiss, lad, 'twould be fine, but, Vavasour, can ye forgive me, think, lad, for hopin', aye, an' prayin' to see your spirit called, just wishin' that ye'd not live the year out?

VAVASOUR [_with condescension_]. Kats, I can, an' I'm not layin' it up against ye, though 'twas a wicked thing for ye to do--for anyone to do. Now, darlin', fetch the bowl.

CATHERINE [_starting for the bowl again but turning on him_]. Vavasour, how does it happen that the callin' is set aside, an' that ye're really here? Such a thing has not been in Beddgelert in the memory of man.

VAVASOUR [_with dignity_]. I'm not sayin' how it's happened, Kats, but I'm thinkin' 'tis modern times whatever, an' things have changed--aye, indeed, 'tis modern times.

CATHERINE [_sighing contentedly_]. Good! 'Tis lucky 'tis modern times whatever!

[THE CURTAIN.]

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